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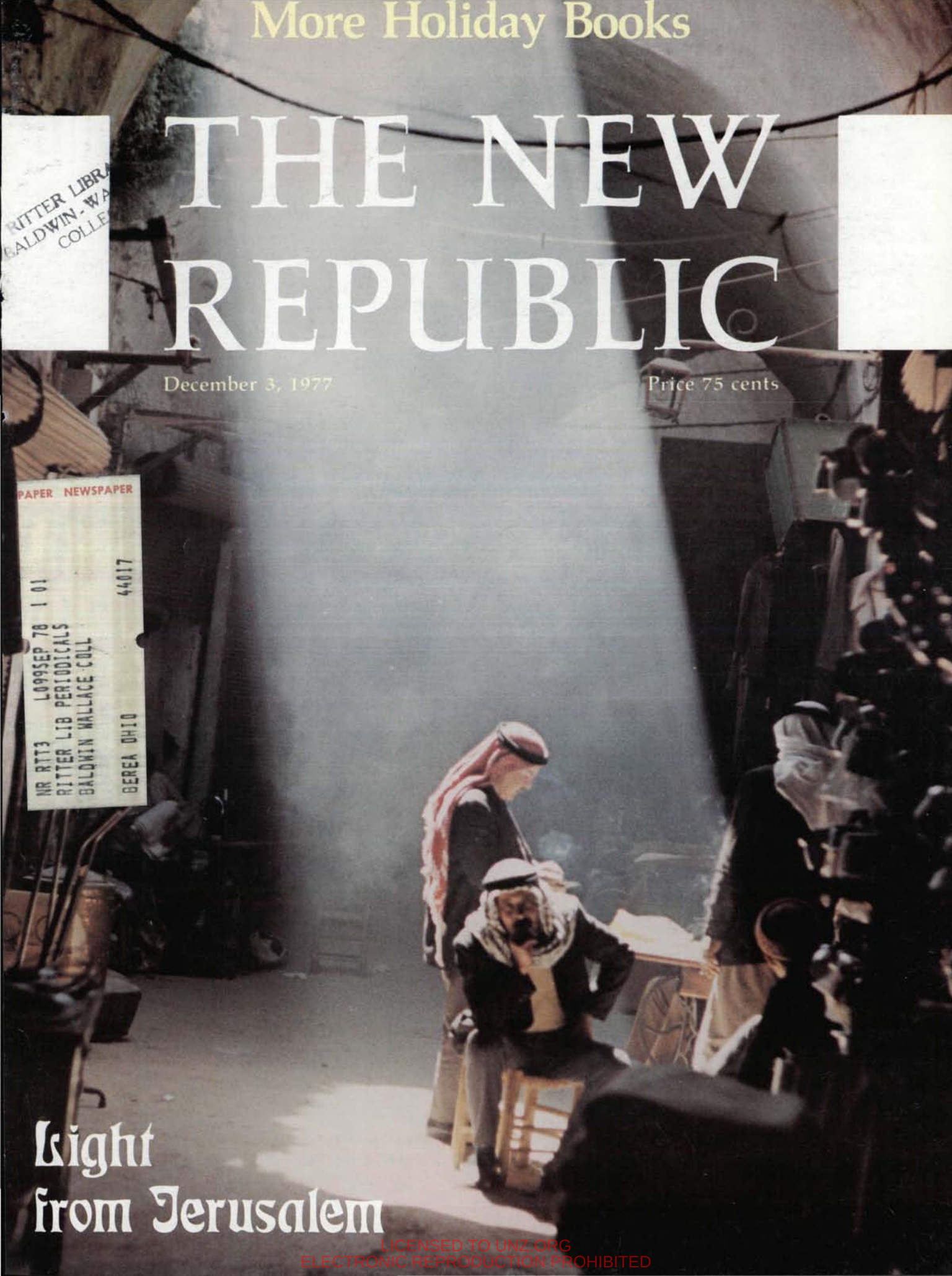

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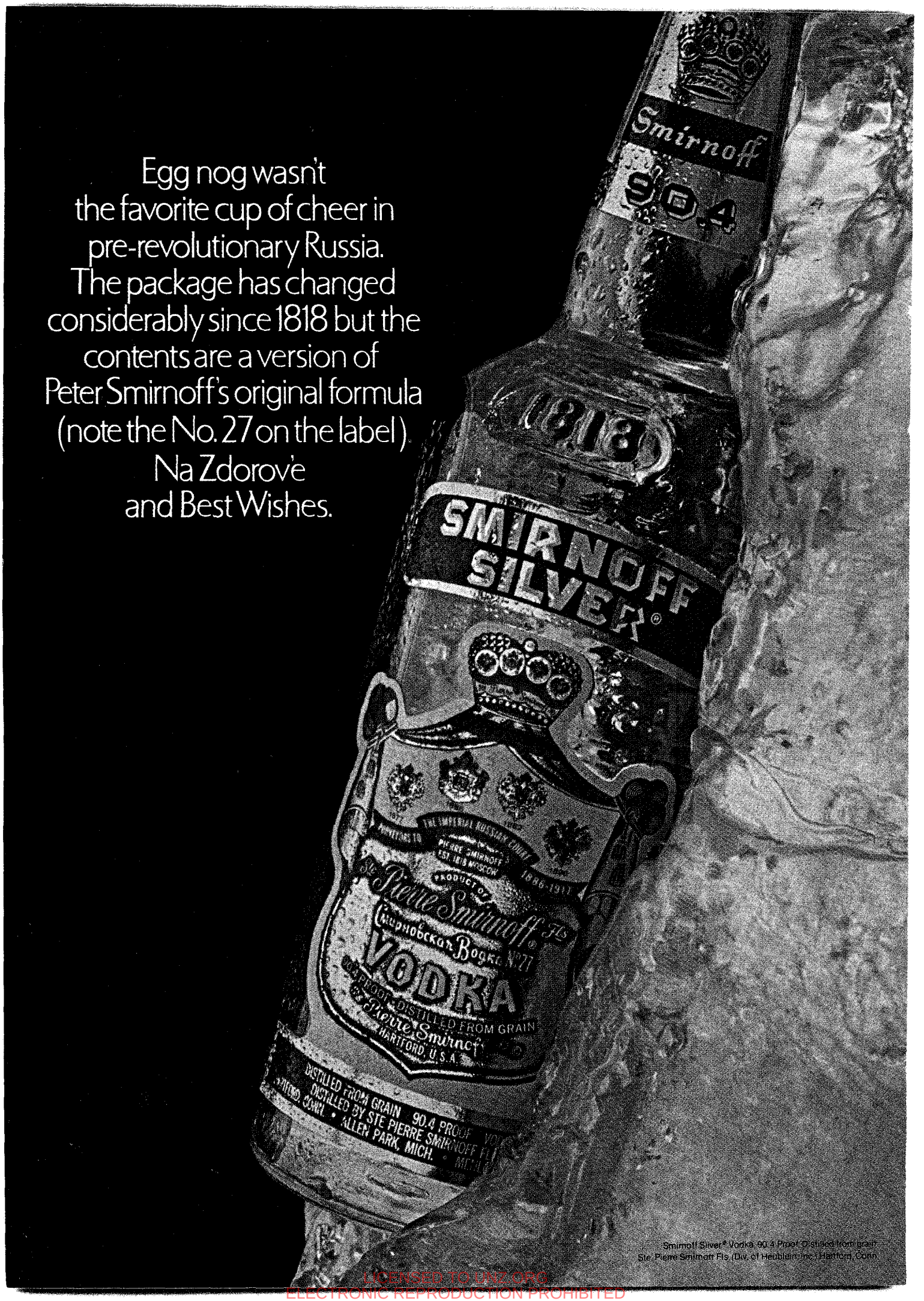

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TRB

from Washington
December 3, 1977

Tick Tick Tick

As I walked down Connecticut Avenue the other day I saw a man and woman with a 2-way radio directing the hanging of a sign on the fourth floor of a building overlooking the intersection. It was Justin Blackwelder, of The Environmental Fund, and a secretary and they were putting up their new Population Clock. It has 10 digits and carries the words "Every Minute Another 172 Persons."

Below is a small park with a statue of the Rev. John Witherspoon inscribed "Princeton," and "1794" and some patriotic words. He is looking away from the Population Clock and what he would say about it I don't know; the continent in his day stretched out emptily from the little College of New Jersey and nobody had heard of over-population; in fact there were only around 700 million people on earth.

Now the ten digits of the clock try to keep up with current births like the speedometer of a racing car. At noon that Monday the figure was 4,340,856,-107, with 172 more a minute, 10,300 an hour, about a quarter million a day, 1.7 million a week, 7.5 million a month and, yes, 90 million a year—or about the population of an additional Scandinavia and United Kingdom.

It's quite a sight as the last autumnal leaves flutter down. Joe Greco is in business below on N Street selling squash, pumpkins and cider from a solitary vegetable barrow. He is oblivious to the demographic turmoil above. He says it's almost too cold now for customers. I think in 1984 we might all have a block party when the final "999,999,999" turns into round numbers for the earth's fifth billion as the new babe appears.

Why does Hollywood make apocalyptic science fiction films like *Star Wars* when real life on earth is so much more exciting? Global resources like oil are petering out while population multiplies. Ruth Leger Sivard, in her *World Military and Social Expenditures—1977*, says the nations spent $350 billion for armies and navies last year. That's more than the total income of the poorest half of the population. Thirty million people are presently in uniform.

The scarcity of food for our increasing world population has brought an ironic twist. While superpowers Russia and the United States warily arm against each other the USSR is increasingly coming into the market to buy America's grain. In 1972 the Soviets turned up with the largest food deficit of any country in history and a Republican administration in Washington arranged to fill the need, boosting the price of bread at the US supermarkets to do so. The Soviets bought 19 million tons worth $1.2 billion, and the price rose from $1.61 a bushel to $5 a year later. In fact, the Russians quietly cornered a quarter of the US wheat crop. Unobservant Agriculture Secretary Earl Butz continued to pay export subsidies amounting to an estimated $316 million. Deputy foreign trade minister Alkhimov later offered to resell the Americans some of their wheat at triple the price, observing agreeably, "After all, look at Alaska. We sold you that for $7 million. That was cheap, too, but you don't hear us complaining."

What a drama: a small planet with rising population and diminishing resources; two nuclear rivals who worry about their credibility gap—not that they lack capacity to incinerate their rival (each has it) but over whether their rival thinks they will use it if appropriately tempted. Meanwhile, as half the world's population lives in poverty the two big powers hold interminable strategic arms talks to set game rules on their weapons and traffic in grain supplies as global food grows scarcer. I think it's a promising Hollywood scenario—though improbable.

Getting back to the Population Clock, there are signs that it's slowing down. Lester Brown, the president of Worldwatch Institute, thinks world population growth was at its peak in 1970 and is now descending. Some countries (East and West Germany, Austria and the United Kingdom) have stable or declining populations. (West Germans call this demographic trend "Der Pillenknick" of the "Pill Pinch.") The United States birth rate continues to fall but its population continues to rise in good part because of illegal immigration from Mexico. Mexico's present population of 64 million will double in 20 years, it is estimated, unless they all come over the border. Former Immigration Commissioner Leonard Chapman figured that there might be 12 million illegals here already. The Carter

(continued on page 38)

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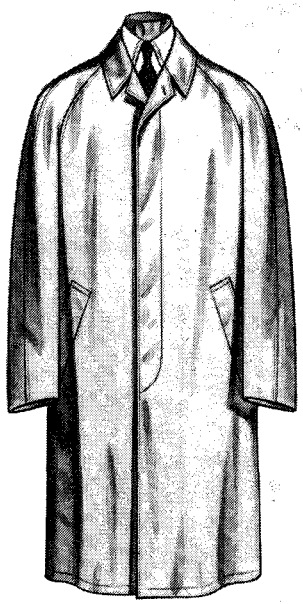

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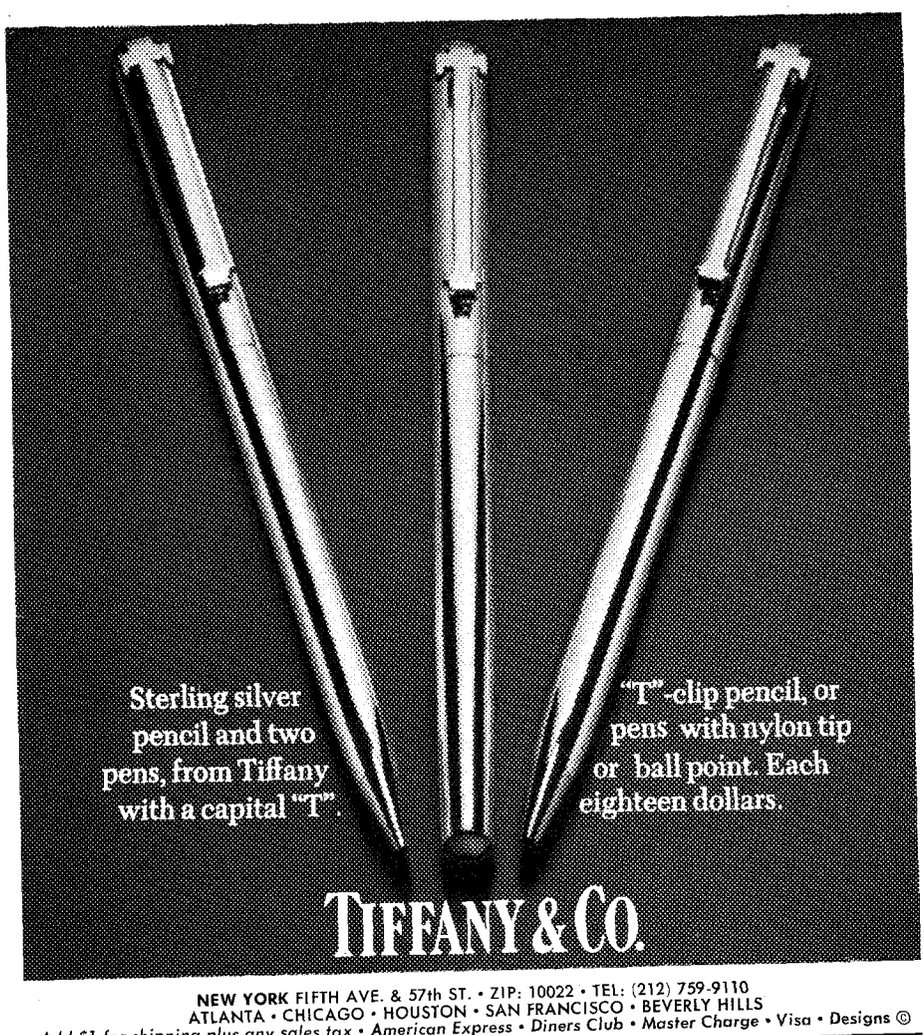
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THE NEW REPUBLIC
December 3, 1977

Hope in the Middle East

If, three weeks ago, we had assembled the recognized academic experts on the Arab-Israeli conflict, the most knowledgeable journalists and writers and the leading State Department consultants and asked them to let their imaginations roam, to speculate freely about possible events, none of them would have come close to describing what actually happened in Jerusalem on November 19. In an age of scholarly specialization and scientific expertise, of computer projections and instant communication, Anwar Sadat has proven that history still can be affected by human impulse; it still is possible to amaze the world; it still is possible to be a hero.

Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, to the holy places of the old city, to the Yad Vashem holocaust memorial, to the eternal flame that burns for Israel's war dead, and to the Knesset itself: all these together represent a remarkable and courageous effort. In a few days, Sadat cut loose from the ancient shibboleths of Arab politics and addressed himself, as no Arab leader ever has done, to the anxieties and hopes of Israel's Jews. And this remarkable effort elicited a remarkable response, not yet in the form of public agreements or official statements, but in popular enthusiasm. Sadat rightly said that he could read his achievement in the eyes of the Israelis—men, women, and children—who everywhere rushed to greet him. He could have read it again in Egyptian eyes on his return to Cairo. Perhaps it isn't always true, but it is true today: the people want peace.

But even if Sadat understands that desire and has moved, like the astute politician he is, to give it expression, his trip still is extraordinary and surprising. Why such a risky attempt to break the Arab-Israeli deadlock? And why now, on the eve of the Geneva conference? We can hardly guess at Sadat's private analyses and motivations. But there are reasons for his trip that can be drawn out of the objective circumstances in which he finds himself.

In part, these circumstances have to do with Egypt's precarious economy and the terrible poverty of her people. But there are also more immediate circumstances—the products, we think, of American diplomacy. The expressions of gratitude addressed by the Egyptian leader and by Prime Minister Begin to President Carter, thought they may have been ironic, were not entirely misplaced. American pressure for an immediate convening of the Geneva Conference and for an overall settlement probably was the critical stimulus of Sadat's visit. For that pressure had created a curious diplomatic situation in which Egypt, America's chief Arab ally, was steadily being replaced by Syria as the dominant power in the ongoing negotiations. Eager for success, American diplomats worked hard to understand and accommodate President Assad; his consent seemed to them the absolutely critical feature of any overall settlement. The Egyptians could be counted on, the Israelis would be dragged along, but it was necessary to reach out to the Syrians. (Even with Sadat in Jerusalem, and the Syrians denouncing him, President Carter was still working hard: "President Assad . . . genuinely wants peace, but he has become kind of a spokesman in a strange way for some of the more radical Arab leaders who don't yet want to move"—as if Assad's intransigence were a new or surprising development.) But reaching out to Assad meant setting up a Geneva Conference where maximalist Arab demands seemed certain to meet fearful yet reasonable Israeli resistance—a conference where failure was likely and war a consequence of failure.

Consider the procedural disagreements of the last few months. Sadat worriedly sought a foreign minister's meeting in Washington to prepare the ground for Geneva. The Syrians said no, and no such meeting was held. Sadat clearly was prepared to go to Geneva without the PLO, at least initially, but the Syrians insisted on PLO representation and the

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Americans pressed the Israelis to agree to a "low-level" presence. Sadat wanted to move quickly from the opening ceremonial session, where the Arab delegations would be united, to bilateral talks, where he could deal with the Israelis alone. That last issue was still being debated when the Egyptian president decided that Jerusalem was even better than Washington—and in Jerusalem he defended Palestinian rights without mentioning the PLO and began the bilateral negotiations that the Syrians had tried to prevent and that the Americans probably would have foregone. His bold move has reestablished Egypt in the central diplomatic position. It has also opened a new road to peace, which may, but also may not, pass through Geneva.

The Israelis obviously were delighted by Sadat's sudden move. But it brought them up against an old dilemma—and in a most dramatic form: how to respond to words, gestures, symbols when the only things they could respond with, the only things they could yield, were substantive in character. Begin was and is ready enough to go to Cairo, but his trip hardly would represent a concession since Israel's prime ministers always have been ready to go to Cairo for direct negotiations. The one substantive offer he could make (which it appears he did make)—withdrawal in the Sinai—Sadat was in no position to accept. A separate peace, though something like it may lie ahead, isn't yet in the cards. Talking to reporters, State Department officials suggested that the reciprocal move of the Israelis should take the form of a compromise on PLO representation at Geneva. But it is doubtful that Sadat asked for very much along that line. And why should the PLO leaders benefit from a trip they were so busily and brutally attacking? And what does one learn about PLO intentions, and those of the Syrians too, from the hysterical denunciations of Sadat, not for what he said in Jerusalem but merely for going there? Begin might have indicated some greater willingness to recognize the identity and aspirations of the people; he might have spoken of withdrawals from the West Bank: on both these points we have long argued that Israeli concessions will be necessary. But such concessions are more likely to come at the end than at the very beginning of a long negotiating process—that is, along with reciprocal Arab concessions on concrete arrangements protecting Israel's security and defining the real meaning of normal relations. Probably the Israelis only could do what they apparently did do: give sufficent indications of openness and flexibility to keep alive the possibilities that Sadat had created. Soon enough, if serious talks begin, they will have to face the hard decisions of which he spoke at the final press conference in Jerusalem. But if the talks really are serious, with both sides committed not only to a formal peace but to an active friendship, those decisions may be less difficult than they have looked in the past.

The new road to peace is a local road, not an international highway, and for the moment at least the American role as traffic director will have to be relinquished. It is not a good time for elaborate schemes and beautiful designs; it is a time for quiet support. We should aim, very simply, at facilitating the moves that Israel and Egypt arrange together. That will require some adjustments in both the White House and the State Department, and there have been a few graceless remarks suggesting the old ambitions and interventionist habits are not easily foregone. But in this case, as in every other, the key to peace lies with local leadership and local interests. Old enemies must walk together, working out their mutual problems at their own pace, in their own fashion. That process has begun, we hope. Let us be sure to respect it.

Political Refugees

It is a cruel irony and an embarrassment. In Rumania, the Soviet Union and Latin America, human rights initiatives by the United States have succeeded in winning some liberalization in immigration policies. But now, it develops, the laws of the United States make it difficult or impossible for this country to admit the refugees it has created.

Under international pressure, much of it American, the Soviet Union in recent months has significantly increased the number of people it will allow to emigrate. However, the number of immigrant visas and conditional entries available under US immigration law each year are fixed. When the Soviets will let more people out than the US can take in, the remainder are forced to wait in Rome until space becomes available. Currently there are about 5000 Soviet citizens, mainly Jews and Armenians, backlogged in Rome. Many of them will be there for months. Often these immigrants have relatives in the United States, but they do not qualify for preferences available under US law because the relatives are not yet US citizens or permanent resident aliens.

Rumania, too, has shown a willingness to allow citizens to emigrate, apparently motivated by a desire to maintain Most Favored Nation trade status with the United States. Again because of the inflexibilities in US law, however, about 200 Rumanians are stuck in Rome awaiting admission to the US. Worse, Rumania's policy is to grant exit permits for only a specified period. If a would-be immigrant cannot get a US visa or is unable to withstand an extended wait in Rome, he or she may never get out.

The administration has suggested a special bill to free up immigration from Rumania, and Representative Joshua Eilberg is preparing a bill to create a new category in immigration law to cover political refugees. Pending drawn-out consideration of new legislation, however, Senator Edward Kennedy has called for the

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Correspondence

The Bakke case

To the editors:

To deny Allan Bakke admission to a California medical school because of his white skin seems barbaric (*TNR*, Oct. 15). It is a result of the inequities blacks suffered when 14 Republicans and only 2 Democrats were President between Lincoln and FDR, and the GOP was the majority party in Congress. Unless he could recite the Bill of Rights a negro could not buy a poll tax in Mississippi. How many of us white Texans would have qualified? When I visited Natchez, Mississippi, I was more impressed by the wretched shacks the negroes were living in than the beautiful old plantation homes.

As a Texan I have often been complimented on the better homes and treatment the negroes have here, but we are not perfect. When *King Kong* came to the Peoples Theater here in the '30s, every negro in town wanted to see it. Instead of the Jefferson Amusement Company turning the whole theater over to them, they so over-crowded the balcony it fell. If one white with a 15-cent ticket had been underneath, we would have had desegregated theaters in the '30s.

William J.B. Adams
Beaumont, Texas

Bilateral bribery

To the editors:

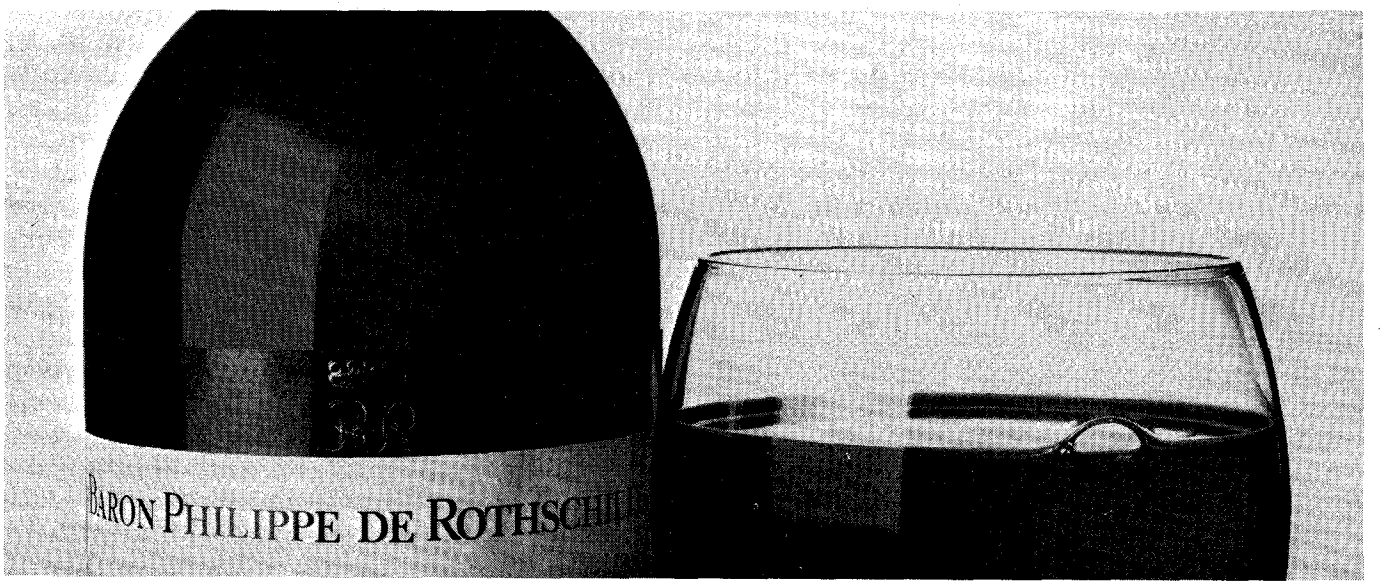
If only the editors' observation were true ("Korea Stonewalls," *TNR*, Nov. 5) that, thanks to the South Koreans, we now know how people in other countries feel when American agents buy off their government officials. We *do* feel robbed by Park Chung Hee's conduct, and we *should* be resolute in dealing sternly with those Americans who accepted the bribes. It is no more corrupt to give than to receive.

Unfortunately, we have not yet learned how people in other countries feel when Americans buy off *their* officials. The public attention showered upon the Koreans' purchases of favor has overlooked a sensitive point: the illegal payments have flowed in both directions. Americans *have* bought off Korean officials.

A 1975 Gulf Oil report prepared by an internal review committee to settle a suit brought against the company by the SEC revealed that Gulf officials had paid four million dollars to the Korean political party of Park Chung Hee in 1966 and 1970. Gulf's Korean investments at that time totaled about $350 million, so the payments were made "on the basis of the need for the continued goodwill and cooperation of the Korean government."

Were we not so xenophobic we would be as concerned about the conduct of Americans abroad as we are with that of foreign nationals in America. Our indignation over Park Chung Hee's refusal to grant the extradition of Tongsun Park is well-placed, but I doubt that our indignation would hit the proper mark as accurately if the American government were fighting the extradition of Gulf Oil officials by Korea.

Woody Connette
New Haven, Connecticut



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Carter administration to use its parole authority on behalf of the Soviet and Rumanian refugees to alleviate personal hardship in order to demonstrate commitment to human rights and freedom of movement. Parole is a device the United States has used in the past to let in Cubans, Hungarians, Vietnamese and other political refugees, and we concur that it should be invoked now.

The parole authority was used to allow Chilean refugees into the United States after the rightist coup. Now the Argentinian government is offering some political prisoners the option of going into exile, at least partially as a result of US human rights intervention. Familes of 50 prisoners have approached the US embassy asking if they can be taken in, but only one has been admitted because the administration believes it lacks authority to act under present immigration law without clearance from Congress.

Immigration choices are among the most painful that the US government has to make. We cannot admit everyone who is oppressed and seeks succor. As a matter of national policy, we have chosen to give preference to persons fleeing political oppression ahead of those seeking to escape poverty, disease and ignorance. We have gone further. We have been insisting that other countries permit their dissatisfied citizens to depart. We reward countries that do so and attempt to punish countries that do not. If we cannot take in all the people who would come here if they could, at least we should expeditiously admit those whose refugee condition we inspired.

It's time for Burns to abdicate.

King Arthur

Arthur Burns is serving his seventh year as chairman of the Federal Reserve Board. President Nixon appointed him, President Ford served under him and now President Carter finds himself under pressure to keep Burns for another term. Burns's appointment as chairman of the Fed expires on January 31, but some congressmen would like to see him stay to cheer up the "business community." Even if he is not named chairman, he could stay as a member of the board for another seven years if he wished, for that is how much time still remains of his 14-year appointment. Some say he would be too proud to stay if he is not chairman; others say he might stay anyway.

Burns is one of those rare birds in this city who enjoys a good reputation in the press, on Capitol Hill and in the bureaucracy. It's not just his competence that impresses people. He is a good politician and a deft magician as well. Reporters call him "the high priest of finance," and Burns seems comfortable playing the part. His appearance is mildly eccentric. His pipe, granny glasses and water-buffalo parting of the hair suggest that he is a man not of our world, but of an older one. He seems indifferent to fashion. An oracle of the industrial state, he makes predictions about the economy's future based on his reading of mysterious things known as M1, M2 and M3—three kinds of money defined by the banking priesthood. Burns himself disparages the use of flummery, but he knows we love it. When he went to testify before the Senate Banking Committee November 9, he took with him several brightly colored charts illustrating the perils of M1. He told his audience that he didn't think the public gained much from the exercise. But he was quite willing to provide the charts, numbers and rationalizations anyway. He knows that people must have something finite to fix on, that they cannot accept the idea that policy may be guided largely by intuition.

Burns is liked also for his candor and clarity. For example, in the Senate hearings in November, the chairman, William Proxmire, tried to get Burns to concede a point. Burns had said that he was opposed to letting the value of the US dollar decline. Proxmire said he understood that, but wasn't it good to stimulate US exports by asking Germany and Japan to increase the value of their currencies? "Senator," Burns interrupted in mid-sentence, "you are playing with words. If you want those currencies to appreciate, and if they appreciate, the dollar depreciates. Now you prefer not to use that word, but you can't get away from the fact." It was the kind of reply that clears the fog, one a less confident man would not have made.

At another point in the hearings, Proxmire tried to have Burns make predictions about future rates of interest on government bonds. Burns refused, twice, adding solemnly, "I have a job that calls for taciturnity about the behavior of interest rates." After some verbal fencing, Burns did agree to make guesses about other econometric figures less sacred to his cult: estimates of GNP, unemployment and inflation. "Well you know," he said to Proxmire, "what happens is you love numbers and you press me and finally I weaken and throw numbers at you. Why you want them in the first place—I don't know what good they do you or anybody else." It's a pleasure to hear a witness speaking plainly in Senate hearings, all the more so in Burns's case because he could easily cloak himself in professional jargon if he wished to. One wonders whether his successor, if there is to be one soon, will be as direct.

Burns's independence itself is what makes him a problem for Carter. Even if he were willing to bend monetary policy to accommodate the new administration—and he seems to be doing just that—he would not be bound by the same personal commitment to Carter's economics as would a Carter appointee. He might not complain to the press, but he might be uncooperative in small ways. If the economy were to go

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sour, even if Burns kept his criticism private, animosity would grow between the Fed and the White House. Carter's friends would blame the Fed, and Burns's friends would blame Carter. The administration would not be able to put its ideas to a fair test with a Nixon man in charge of the Fed. Unless Burns is replaced, people will always wonder what might have been.

One House banking committee aide said that for Carter to keep Burns would be like "having a live-in-mother-in-law." Burns disapproves of Congress's behavior (he says it has "literally been legislating inflation"). He also has spoken against two Carter decisions: the increase in the minimum wage and last spring's (never enacted) tax rebate. He would probably continue this nagging. Liberal economists, including those in the White House, regard some of Burns's ideas as rigidly antique. His insistence on raising interest rates during the inflationary period of 1974, they think, did not cause the recession that followed but certainly made it more painful. According to the younger economists, it was like putting leeches on a leukemia victim. Burns's critics believe that despite the disclaimers, Burns really is obsessed with M1 and the cult of money. They would like to see the government develop a more balanced and more complex view of inflation control, one that diminished the role of the central bank. They agree that the government must fight inflation, but they would not ask Arthur Burns or the Federal Reserve to do the job. They think the government should intervene at the bottom rung of the economy, where prices and wages are set, and not at the top, where interest rates are set. The Burns approach, by their standards, is clumsy, harsh and inexact.

Sen. Proxmire called Burns "the most impressive, most intelligent" witness he's heard in 20 years in the Senate. Nevertheless, he opposed Burns's reappointment as chairman. On the Senate floor November 4, he compared the Federal Reserve's record under Burns to that of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, a football team that's lost 20 games in a row, but refuses to fire its coach. Proxmire's complaint is that under Burns's directorship, federal interest rates increased faster than they did during the tenure of any Fed chairman since 1914. Representative Henry Reuss, chairman of the House banking committee, also thinks it is "time for change," though while explaining this, his aide said in the same breath that Burns might be all right if only he'd change his views. That seems unlikely. The number-two Democrat under Reuss on the committee, Representative Tom Ashley of Ohio, took the unusual step last week of writing to Carter to recommend that Burns be kept as chairman. Ashley's reason: Burns inspires "business confidence."

Carter shouldn't pay much attention to the argument that only Arthur Burns can assuage business. There are many other capable economists and financiers, good businessmen too, who could manage the Federal Reserve Bank. Perhaps they would not be as plain-spoken or self-confident as Burns. They might have their own technocratic quirks. But whatever the Fed might lose in style with Burns's departure, it would gain in youth and flexibility. Arthur Burns should step aside.

Eliot Marshall

Tax shelters demystified.

Rich Guy's Loophole

In 1975 more than two hundred people with incomes exceeding $200,000 legally paid no federal income taxes. In the same year more than 10 million people with incomes between $15,000 to $20,000 paid an average of $2065 each in federal income taxes. To many of those 10 million, and others, the ability to pay no taxes on a $200,000 income seems like some kind of magic known only to the rich—like a secret handshake learned upon the initiation into the fraternity of wealth. To President Carter, this situation was a "disgrace to the human race." There is no magic—just a perfectly legal device known as "tax shelter.".

Tax shelter allows a person to deduct from his income artificial "losses" created by the Internal Revenue Code. The taxpayer does not lose real money, but since he is able to deduct these losses from his real income, he pays less tax, or perhaps no tax at all. The losses "shelter" his income from taxation. The key to tax shelter is the ability to deduct from your income amounts representing "depreciation" that may not really have occurred, on items you haven't really bought. This technique has been applied to baseball players, race horses, cows, oil, movies, books and macadamian nuts. The Tax Reform Act of 1976 curtailed many of these. But the most important one—real estate—remains lucrative. The real estate tax shelter is not so mysterious and complex that it can be understood only by tax lawyers and accountants who have dedicated their professional lives to mapping the labyrinths in the Internal Revenue Code. Perhaps tax shelter can be afforded only by the very rich, but it can be understood by most of the rest of us. Here is an example of how it works.

Let us say a wealthy doctor, whose medical income and income from stock investments puts him in the 60 percent tax bracket, has an opportunity to alleviate his tax burden by investing in a building costing one million dollars. Here is what happens:

1. The doctor pays $100,000 in cash for the building. He borrows the other $900,000 under a "non-recourse" loan. This means he is not personally liable on the loan; instead, it is secured by a mortgage on the building. Therefore, he only has to use $100,000 of his own

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money to buy the one-million-dollar building.

2. The $900,000 mortgage loan matures in 27 years and bears interest at the annual rate of nine percent. To repay this loan with interest requires even annual payments of $90,000 for 27 years. In the first year, $81,000 of this annual payment—nine percent of $900,000—is interest.

3. The one-million-dollar building is assumed for tax purposes to wear out or depreciate at the uniform rate of $40,000 a year for 25 years. (The land value in this illustration is nominal.)

4. Our doctor now leases his building to a tenant who pays annual rent of $90,000. The rent is applied, in full, to pay off the mortgage. Under the lease, the tenant also pays all costs of operations, including utility charges, real estate taxes and insurance premiums. This means that before taxes our doctor is exactly breaking even on his investment.

But on paper the building will show a loss, and this means an after-tax profit for the doctor. The doctor-owner's tax form that year will show rental income of $90,000. But it also will show interest and depreciation expenses of $121,000. Therefore, the doctor will have a paper net loss on this investment of $31,000: $90,000 rent minus $81,000 interest on the mortgage minus $40,000 depreciation on the building. Since the doctor is the owner of the building (even though he's only paid for a tenth of it), the $31,000 loss is considered to be his loss. In computing his taxes, he can deduct it from his other income, even though this income is totally unrelated to the building. As a result, his taxable income is reduced by $31,000. Since he is in a 60 percent tax bracket, this $31,000 reduction in taxable income saves him $18,600 in taxes. In effect, the after-tax return on his investment of $100,000—the amount of his own money he actually invested—is 18.6 percent. For a taxpayer like our doctor to clear 18.6 percent after taxes on a normal investment, he would need an annual pre-tax return of 31 percent. Few normal investments (legal ones, at least) provide that kind of return.

Let us analyze the nature of this $31,000 "loss." The interest component of this "loss" consists of actual money being paid to the lender. But the doctor who deducts the "loss" from his income does not pay the interest with his own money. He uses the rent paid to him by the tenant. If the tenant does not pay the rent and, as a result, the mortgage payments are not made, the lender cannot collect from the doctor because the doctor is not personally liable on the mortgage loan. The lender can either postpone payments or foreclose and take possession of the building. If the value of the building is less than the amount still owed on the mortgage, that is the lender's problem and not the doctor's.

Depreciation, unlike interest, does not require a payment of money by anybody. It is an expense only because the Internal Revenue Code says it is an expense. The Code ordains that a building wears out in equal annual increments over a period of time, and that these increments are deductible. Whether the building does, in fact, wear out or become less valuable is irrelevant. The investor does not have to prove that depreciation actually is occurring. But what really makes depreciation advantageous is that the investor can depreciate the entire building, and not just the part of it he actually has paid for at any given time. If, instead, an investor's "depreciable basis" were limited to his actual cash payment, the annual depreciation "loss" available to our doctor in the first year would have been only $4000—one twenty-fifth of $100,000—rather than $40,000—one twenty-fifth of one million dollars. (The tax saving will decline in the following years because the interest component of the mortgage payment will decline as the mortgage is paid off.)

In this illustration, the method of depreciation is straight-line; that is, it consists of an equal amount each year. Under certain circumstances—when the investor is buying a new building instead of one that is already in use—the Code allows accelerated depreciation, which significantly increases the tax benefits. For example, if the doctor's investment were a new apartment project, the amount of his depreciation in the first year would be twice the amount of straight-line depreciation and he would be entitled to deduct an "expense" of $80,000. If it were a new commercial project such as a shopping center or office building, the amount of his depreciation in the first year would be one and one-half times straight-line depreciation in the first year, or $60,000. Obviously, this does not mean that new properties wear out faster than old properties. Even more than with straight-line depreciation, accelerated depreciation bears no relationship to what is actually happening. Its asserted purpose is not to reflect reality but to encourage investment in new construction.

This right of the investor to deduct interest and depreciation on an investment financed largely by borrowing is the essential constituent of real estate tax shelter. We could vary our illustration by changing the ratio of land to building, the ratio of debt to equity, the rate of depreciation and the rate of repayment of the mortgage. These variations can become complex, but the underlying concept remains simple. The return to an investor from tax shelter can be so great that there is no need for any cash profit on his investment. In the illustration, the doctor had no such profit. All of the rent was used to pay the mortgage. This did not, however, deter him from investing. With an $18,600 return in the form of tax savings on his $100,000 investment, the doctor's response to the assertion that he was getting no cash profit would be, "With losses like these, who needs profits?" Our illustration actually understates the return on a tax-shelter investment. In most cases, over the period of his investment, an investor will realize tax savings large enough to return all the money he actually put in ($100,000 in our

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illustration) plus a 15 to 20 percent annual tax-savings "profit" on what he hasn't yet gotten back. These tax savings ordinarily can be calculated in advance as a matter of simple arithmetic. The only risks are that the investor's tax bracket will decline or that the tenant will be unable to pay sufficient rents to pay the minimum costs of the building, including mortgage payments. These risks are amply compensated for by a return on investment that rarely goes below 15 percent and that is frequently 20 percent or more, especially since the investor probably will get all of his money back in about five or six years. The amount and the predictability of the return on tax shelter are almost irresistible inducements to the real estate investor who is in a high income-tax bracket. The expectation of tax savings has become increasingly decisive in determining investment decisions—so decisive that the real estate industry (particularly in the area of housing) has become more and more dependent upon the tax shelter provisions of the current tax code.

Undoubtedly, tax shelter has helped to strengthen the real estate industry, which suffers from a chronic shortage of capital. It creates jobs, not only in the real estate and construction industries, but also in related industries which provide the supplies and material necessary for development. The question is whether tax shelter is the best way to do all this. Is it an efficient method of improving our national stock of real estate and helping to stimulate the general economy? Does the public benefit justify laws that permit many wealthy Americans to evade their fair share of taxes?

Defenders of tax shelter argue that its great benefit is to attract capital to real estate development without requiring extensive government machinery. There are no direct government grants, subsidies or appropriations, and no large bureaucratic apparatus is needed to raise capital or to direct or supervise its application and use.

Clearly, tax shelter does attract capital. But it is neither the fairest nor the most effective way of stimulating investment in real estate. It distorts economic values and patterns of investment. It results in lower quality and usefulness of construction. Its cost cannot be measured because it is, in reality, a hidden public subsidy of private investment. Worst of all, tax shelter creates inequities which corrode our tax system. The return on a tax shelter investment is unrelated to the economic value of the asset that is being purchased. Because of this, the investor can be indifferent to the quality of the real estate. It does not matter whether a project is constructed out of plywood or out of brick. His return remains the same. This creation of tax benefits does not mean that anything of real worth has been created. The increase of capital investment in real estate because of tax shelter does not mean better construction, beauty of design, sensible planning or good management. Too often, the reverse is the case. "Pride of ownership" is an expression frequently used in real estate. It suggests an interest in structural soundness and architectural design. But except in a technical legal sense, the tax shelter investor owns nothing except a stream of losses. With little or no stake in the financial success of a project, the investor's only concern is that the project not collapse completely, resulting in foreclosure. As a result, much tax shelter construction is marginal, and responsible for overbuilt neighborhoods and inadequate management and maintenance. This is particularly true in the area of housing, where tax benefits are the most liberal. By divorcing the return on investment from the asset being invested in, the tax code encourages unscrupulous promoters to enter the real estate business, selling ingenious new schemes to evade taxes.

Tax shelter is not an indirect subsidy; it is a hidden subsidy. It may be administratively efficient, as its proponents argue. But a hidden subsidy carries with it an obscurity of purpose and an uncertainty of result. The alternative to a hidden subsidy (other than none at all) is a direct one. This alternative is said to be politically unfeasible: public opposition would be too great. Therefore, Congress has to do by indirection what it cannot do directly. It is easier to provide money for real estate by not collecting taxes, rather than to collect the taxes and pay them out, even though the net result in terms of revenues is the same. Like most hidden subsidies administered through the tax system, the real estate tax shelter carries a cost that is impossible to calculate. The problem of computing the amount of the lost revenues is made even more difficult by the seemingly endless capacity of lawyers and accountants to devise new methods of increasing tax benefits by the economic emasculation of a real estate transaction—for example, by artificially increasing the ratio of debt to equity, or manipulating interest rates and construction expenses.

The real estate industry does need help. The costs of real estate have risen drastically over the past decade, but the price payable for the use of real estate has not kept pace, particularly in the area of housing. Real estate is a severely competitive industry surrounded by and dependent upon other markets that are non-competitive: the banking industry, which supplies most of the capital for real estate development; the steel, aluminum and lumber industries which supply the raw materials; and the unions that supply the labor. The fragmentation of the real estate industry in the face of economic concentration has made it unstable and volatile. In times of "tight" money, when credit is "rationed" by the banks, US Steel and Alcoa have very little trouble obtaining credit, while the real estate industry, lacking that economic power, finds it difficult to obtain credit at any interest rate. It is hard to imagine any solution to this problem without a basic revision of the marketplace itself. Any such fundamental solution probably would require a recognition that real estate

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development is more a community responsibility than an entrepreneurial function. As a palliative, we rely instead on the availability of tax shelter. Tax shelter is effective in attracting capital, but it is defective as an incentive to sound development. It is a subsidy to the real estate industry that has been turned into a subsidy for the wealthy.

Robert L. Nessen

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Before you get all huffy about
the preceding article, consider this one.

Middle Class Loophole

While campaigning in February 1976, Jimmy Carter made what was, in the context of American politics, a radical proposal. He told the League of Women Voters that he wanted to eliminate the income tax deduction for interest payments on home mortgages. The reaction of his rival Democrats was surprised and disbelieving. Henry Jackson said the idea was "ridiculous," Milton Shapp called it "astounding" and Mo Udall, wary of so foolhardy an opponent, discounted it entirely: "I can't believe he really means it." Carter stuck by it anyway, stressing that he intended it as one part of a total overhaul aimed at drastically simplifying the tax code and lightening the burden on middle and low-income taxpayers. Despite his stubbornness and the clear unpopularity of the idea among the nation's 60 million homeowners, the issue soon dropped out of sight, defying the predictions of campaign reporters who thought Carter had made a blunder equivalent to Edmund Muskie's sobbing in the New Hampshire snow. In fact, it had no discernible effect on his fortunes. President Ford, trailing badly all summer, never bothered to raise the matter, perhaps because he figured no one would believe Carter actually meant to abolish the interest deduction. Ford could have confronted Carter with his own words during the debates, but he must have been haunted by the fear that his opponent would laugh out loud and reply, "You've got to be kidding. No one in his *right mind*. . . ."

The reason politicians don't talk seriously about eliminating the interest deduction is its immense popularity. Eighty-three percent of all itemized returns claim it in a typical year, placing it second only to the deduction for state and local taxes. Though claimed by taxpayers in every income bracket, the deduction is used most often by those in the middle levels, where nine out of every ten tax returns claim it every year. In all, Americans deduct $38.6 billion in interest payments every year, leaving six billion dollars a year in taxpayers' pockets that otherwise would go to Uncle Sam.

The deduction covers all personal, non-business-related interest payments. This includes other kinds of borrowing (such as interest paid on credit cards), but by far the largest element in personal debt is home mortgages. Business-related interest payments are deductible in any event, like any other ordinary business expense.

The reasons for including this loophole in the 1913 income tax code have grown hazy with time. Probably the important one was the supposed difficulty of distinguishing between personal interest expenses and business expenses. Of course the problem of defining a legitimate business expense permeates the tax law, and has not been thought to justify other blanket deductions for whole categories of spending. There also is an economic rationale sometimes offered for the interest deduction. This is that interest payments amount to "negative income"—that is, two people with the same gross income will differ in net income if one has debts and the other doesn't. The flaw in this argument is that interest is a payment for the use of money, just like the payment for any other good or service. We don't subtract the cost of a ham sandwich before defining a person's net income. Why should it make any difference if a person spends his money on interest instead?

Far from avoiding inequalities in treatment of similarly situated people, the interest deduction actually creates them. In the case of two taxpayers with an identical salary, where one owns a home and deducts the cost of his mortgage interest and the other rents, the first will pay lower taxes. This loophole, like most, violates the crucial principle of "horizontal equity"—the premise that people of identical income should pay identical taxes. This departure is deliberate. It is intended to serve the really important social purpose of the deduction, which is to encourage home ownership, a goal promoted by several governmental policies. (Another such policy incorporated in the tax code is failure to tax homeowners for the imputed rental value of their properties. In effect, the return on a family's investment in its own home is tax-free, whereas a renter pays the landlord in after-tax dollars.) These government policies grow out of the notion that there is some special civic virtue imbued by home ownership. The owner supposedly is a more stable and reliable citizen than the person who rents.

The inducement to home ownership is not an accidental feature of the 1913 tax. The income tax enacted in 1860 and repealed after the Civil War included a deduction for rent payments, to preserve a balance between owners and tenants. The present code was designed to encourage homebuying by placing a disproportionate share of the nation's tax load on

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tenants. Renters can be discriminated against with relative impunity, since they make up a small proportion of the population. This political protection is built into the system. Without the interest loophole, people would have no strong incentives to buy a home instead of rent it. As things stand now, young, middle-class adults have an overwhelming reason to buy. The very rich and the poor don't profit from this provision, since those in the upper brackets don't require mortgages and those at the bottom can't afford to buy homes regardless of the tax breaks available.

The other beneficiaries of the interest deduction are the housing and real estate sectors of the economy and the institutions that finance mortgages, which receive what amounts to an indirect subsidy. The 50 percent increase in home ownership since World War II is due mostly to tax incentives, though credit must also go to federal limits on interest rates. The interest deduction thus is largely responsible for the widespread problem of urban sprawl, because it has encouraged Americans to pour millions of dollars into single-family dwellings in order to get the tax breaks that go with them. This preferential treatment for homeowners no doubt has channelled a lot of money into houses that otherwise would have gone into apartment buildings—or other, more imaginative, space and land-sharing arrangements—which would be a more efficient and attractive use of scarce urban property. Discovering in recent years that a home is in the eye of the beholder, realtors have begun selling individual units in apartment complexes, a practice that serves no purpose other than to provide purchasers the benefits of the interest deduction. Does anyone seriously believe that people buy studio apartments in high-rise buildings out of a desire for stability, or pride in ownership, or the yearning to put down roots? Or that the vaunted civic virtues supposedly conferred by home ownership are more likely to be present in the owner of an apartment condominium than in the tenant who lives in an identical complex across the street?

Obviously the principle motivation for buying an apartment, instead of renting one, is the tax incentive. The only notable difference between the average owner and the average renter is that the former has more money—which is why he or she is in a position to take advantage of the deduction to begin with. This is a case of the government demanding sacrifices of the poor in order to ease the strain on those better off. It is also an instance of the tyranny of the majority, which can shift its rightful burden to the poor precisely because it can outvote them. The interest deduction's broad public support should not obscure its unfairness.

Nor should it blind us to the deduction's other ill effects. For example, the interest deduction encourages taxpayers to claim other deductions. The interest loophole promotes the exploitation of every other loophole by inducing taxpayers to itemize their deductions. Without the interest deduction, after all, most people would be better off claiming the standard deduction. Once a taxpayer can claim a deduction large enough to make itemizing deductions pay, he has good reason to complicate his life and strain his wits in search of every other deduction to which he is even arguably entitled.

The political reasons for keeping the interest deduction are plain to see. It is the middle class's loophole, available to nearly everyone. The collective unconscious of the middle class probably regards it as a way of escaping its full obligations and foisting the bill off on the most politically vulnerable segments of the voting public—those at the top of the income scale and those at the bottom. Presumably these groups can be forced to pay more than their fair share, since they lack the votes to prevent it. This deduction is the middle class's free lunch.

This beguiling meal is a mirage. This loophole is little more than a sop to the overburdened middle class, a way of cutting its members in on a rigged deal. The taxes lost through this loophole amount to protection money paid by the rich to make sure no one messes up the cozy tax arrangements they now enjoy. The interest deduction gives the middle-class taxpayers a stake in our ridiculously complicated and wasteful tax code. Without an interest in the status quo, they might demand all sorts of radical action. Throwing them a bone keeps them quiet.

Both the wealthy and the middle class are so caught up in protecting their own loopholes that they fail to recognize how everyone loses from the irrational collection of rules that make up the present code. A huge amount of money is wasted every year by investors who are happy to throw it away in exchange for valuable tax breaks. A wealthy taxpayer may spend, say, $16 million to avoid paying $18 million in taxes. That money will be invested in unfeasible ventures that, from the standpoint of economic rationality and efficiency, shouldn't be undertaken. Much of it will go to lawyers and accountants and business advisers who design and build the elaborate paper structures these tax-saving arrangements depend on. The current tax system practically compels rich people to sink their money in such projects, since it costs them less to do so and claim deductions for them than to pay the high tax rates that prevail in the upper brackets. Such investments are economically rational for the wealthy taxpayer, but irrational for the rest of us, since they squander scarce resources that could be used more efficiently elsewhere. Such loopholes waste resources and thereby lower the general standard of living, making us all worse off. By closing these loopholes and lowering marginal rates, the government and the taxpayers could eliminate such waste, cut out the lawyers and accountants and split the difference between them.

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There is a recurring cycle in tax reform. A cry goes up about loopholes and how the rich are escaping their just soaking. Instead of a comprehensive reform (and a concommitant lowering of rates), there is a half-hearted effort which only complicates things instead of making them simpler. Tax experts find new ways to misuse the new rules, and the process starts all over again. A good example is the so-called "minimum tax" instituted as part of the 1969 tax reforms. Rather than eliminating any deductions, it imposed a tax despite them—but only on certain kinds of income of certain people, under certain circumstances. As the rich have rearranged their affairs to take advantage of these limitations, pressure has grown to expand the minimum tax. Representative Dave Stockton, a freshman Republican from Michigan, has made this problem one of his specialties. He says, "The increase of the minimum tax shows the progressive disintegration of logic in the tax system. The federal government provides deductions to effectively lower the absurdly high nominal rates, but among a few wealthy people the tax paid departs so radically from the public view of what it should be that you have to require a minimum tax. The system is schizophrenic, and the minimum tax is the most irrational tax you can imagine."

The American income tax isn't an income tax, but a tax on certain narrowly defined types of income. At best, it serves a dual function: to collect revenue and to encourage people to conduct themselves (and spend their money) in particular ways sanctioned by the government. The past few years reveal a quickening urge to use the tax to promote certain goals (like installing home insulation) that have nothing to do with raising money. Inevitably, these loopholes are exploited in ways that have nothing to do with the social goals they are supposed to serve, and that distort the economy in ways their authors did not intend. A radically simplified tax code, with lower rates and few or no deductions, is the only way to achieve genuine fairness.

Since becoming President, Jimmy Carter has changed his mind about the personal interest deduction. In September it was reported that he wanted to limit it to $10,000, a typical superficial measure that would further complicate the income tax code without appreciably affecting the distribution of the load or eliminating the social distortions it causes. The encouraging thing about Carter's original proposal was the cast of mind it suggested. What he apparently understood then, and has conveniently forgotten, is that wholesale tax reform—which he promised and the public voted for—requires that every taxpayer be willing to give up his loophole in exchange for everybody else giving up theirs. A piecemeal tax reform is unlikely to get anywhere because no one will tamely sacrifice his interests without the assurance that everyone else is doing likewise, and that the end result will be to the benefit of all. Making the American people understand all this, and persuading them to support it, would be an unparalleled moral triumph. Jimmy Carter might be able to do it, but it isn't clear whether he wants to.

Stephen Chapman

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West Pointers don't want change, but they must tolerate those who do.

West Point Faces Life

by Stephen Kinzer

The last decade has been a period of unprecedented and nearly unremitting trauma for the United States Military Academy at West Point. In 1970, General Samuel Koster, a graduate, was relieved as Superintendant of the Academy after being found guilty of covering up atrocities during his service in Vietnam. Next, the most serious cheating scandal in the school's history made front-page news everywhere, informing America that a huge chunk of the student body had violated the sacred "honor code" that is as much a part of the Academy's tradition as Pershing and Patton. And last year, much against its will, West Point began admitting women to the "long grey line."

In recognition of the turmoil and doubt afflicting West Point, the Defense Department last April recalled from retirement one of the Academy's most respected

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living graduates, General Andrew Goodpaster, former NATO Commander and adviser to four Presidents, to be its new Superintendent. His job is to preserve what the Army views as the inviolate principles of the institution and to make those improvements and changes necessary to rebuild its Congressional and public image. The Academy calls this "change within tradition."

West Point always has wanted to function apart from civilian society. Its mission is unique, and the process of socialization and regimentation to which its students are subjected is unmatched for intensity—or for success. Each year 1475 young people enter West Point. After four years slightly more than 1000 emerge as commissioned Army officers.

West Point graduates represent only eight percent of the Army officer corps, but they tend to rise more quickly than other officers to positions of influence within the Army. Those who leave after fulfilling their five-year military commitment tend to rise equally rapidly in business. As a group, they abhor what they perceive as a lowering of standards forced upon the Academy by a civilian world that does not comprehend the needs of an army.

The intensity of public reaction to recent events at West Point indicates the special position it holds in our national self-image. To many Americans, West Point symbolizes our country's toughness and strength. It reassures us that we still have a big stick to shake at our adversaries. West Point is said to demonstrate that there is no conflict over our national purpose between military and civilian, that a young person can be given an outstanding college education and be taught the techniques of war at the same time. The grey 16,000-acre campus overlooking the Hudson River seems a citadel of sense and stability set apart from a confusing and uncertain world.

It has become harder to adhere to that view in recent years. Even within the Academy itself, doubt and ambivalence are clearly evident. Meanwhile the cleavage between civilian society and the rigid, somewhat bizarre regimen of West Point now seems more visible and less reconcilable. Pressures that have altered our society in recent years are beginning to be felt at West Point. Insiders there fear that changes now underway and others that may come will make West Point more like other schools, cadets more like other students and officers more like civilians. This is a trend they detest.

The struggle within the Academy today is to preserve traditional military values and to retain the school's elite nature, while conceding that it cannot exist entirely apart from the nation to whose defense it is devoted. That concession comes grudgingly from many at West Point.

The reason for the extraordinary continuity of tradition and structure at West Point is the self-perpetuating nature of the officer corps that runs it. The faculty is almost exclusively military and more than half its members are West Point graduates. (All past superintendents, like Goodpaster, were graduates of the Academy.) Given that fact and the intense loyalty to tradition that West Point inculcates in its students, it is clear that the Academy itself always will be resistant to change. There is a faction within the faculty that is considered "progressive," but only by West Point's narrow standards. What seems a major change to West Pointers, even a controversial one—for example, allowing underclassmen to mention current events during meals—appears insignificant to an outsider.

As the cadet passes through the Academy, his role changes. Upperclassmen traditionally have had the authority to abuse and humiliate underclassmen virtually without restriction. Some of the more infantile and sadistic of these practices have been eliminated since General Goodpaster's arrival. For example, upperclassmen may no longer require plebes to hop up and down stairs for long periods of time; plebes no longer are required to sit on the front two inches of their seats; and they may not be deprived of food or drink by upperclassmen interrogating them so aggressively at mealtimes that they have no time to eat. But plebes still must carry a sheaf of verbatim "knowledge" in their heads and spew it out upon request; they must not allow their backs to touch their chairs at mealtimes; and they live by the age-old Academy rituals.

"Cut the dessert at the appropriate time," reads the West Point guide given to new cadets, "according to the following procedure: 'SIR, THE DESSERT FOR THIS MEAL IS ____. WOULD ANYONE NOT CARE FOR ____ DURING THIS MEAL, SIR?' On receipt of the information needed, cut the required number of pieces, then announce, 'THE DESSERT HAS BEEN CUT, DESSERT TO CADET ____ FOR INSPECTION, SIR.'"

To the surprise of some visitors, the student body (or "corps of cadets") is remarkably heterogeneous. Students come from every state and several foreign countries. Sons of dirt-poor southern sharecroppers, children of neat suburban homes, Army brats, city kids all march together at West Point. With the admission of women and a fairly recent effort, begun in the late 1960s, to recruit students from minority groups, West Point can boast one of the most integrated student bodies of any college in the country.

Admission is very competitive. Both a Congressional nomination and a good score on the College Board exam are necessary for most applicants. Mean entrance exam scores for the class of 1981 were 548 in English and 629 in math. Seventy-five percent of those admitted were in the top fifth of their high school class, and almost all were outstanding in athletics or some other activity. Young people come to West Point for different reasons. Some, naturally, dream of a military career and understand that a West Point diploma

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probably will assure them of success. Many have accepted the altruistic Army view, especially prevalent at the Academy, that while there are other places to make a contribution to the nation, those who are most serious about service and who contribute the most to their country are professional soldiers. But a surprising number of the cadets have come because they can get a better education at West Point than anywhere else they could go. These are often students from families that cannot afford expensive private colleges, whose high schools are not prestigious enough to help them win scholarships and who want something more than their home towns can offer. To these young people, West Point is a ticket out of town to glory or, at least, respectability. The Academy carries great prestige in the nation's heartland, where the nomination of a local youngster to attend West Point is a major event; the lucky nominee is commonly thought of as "set for life."

With this great prestige, of course, comes an increased pressure on cadets to succeed. If things don't work out, they cannot merely transfer to other schools or drop out, the way civilian students do; they can only "resign." Many cadets know that if they resign, they will disappoint family, friends, and sometimes their whole community which, caught up in the mythology of the Academy, may feel that resignation is equivalent to surrender under fire. General Goodpaster wants to ease some of this pressure. "There has been a subtle shift of emphasis," Goodpaster says of his brief tenure. "The grade is not an end in itself. The learning also has value. I think we need to cut down, to an extent, on interpersonal competition, and to diminish the role of the grade."

Goodpaster's most important mission, as he sees it, is to improve the academic quality of West Point. Few recent superintendents have devoted themselves to this considerable challenge. Of the 48 courses a cadet takes during his four years at West Point, 41 are required. This schedule does not permit cadets to choose a specialized "major." Classes are fairly small, and the student-teacher ratio is eight-to-one. Classes are not entirely stiff, but they are governed by the kind of rules never found in civilian universities. If a teacher is more than two minutes late for a class, for example, a predesignated student must report to the department office for instructions. In the hallways of the academic buildings hang signs advising: "Cadets wanting to contact an instructor, please see receptionist." The curriculum is about 40 percent social sciences and humanities, and 60 percent natural sciences, math and engineering, reflecting the Academy's origin as an engineering school.

There is no discernible intellectual environment at West Point. Time is so tightly budgeted that a cadet couldn't pursue an independent interest even if the opportunity were available. The tight schedule and the attitude of many instructors discourage independent inquiry. "There's none at all," a young officer at West Point snorted when asked about the quality of intellectual stimulus available to cadets outside of class. "Many of the older guys around here are afraid of that sort of thing. And there is that same barrier you see here all the time, that they went to school here thirty years ago and they did fine while the rest of the world went to hell, so why change an institution that's proven successful?"

One part of the West Point curriculum that might profitably be imitated by civilian colleges is physical education. It is impossible to walk around West Point without seeing teams practicing any of two dozen sports or cadets running (not just jogging) along the roadside, often making comical efforts to greet and salute every officer they pass. West Point does not excel at intercollegiate athletics—though it has had its share of success—but every student benefits from a comprehensive physical training program that far exceeds comparable programs at most civilian colleges in both breadth and intensity.

General Koster's resignation and demotion in 1970, resulting from his role in the cover up of the Mylai massacre, was the occasion when modern reality first intruded on the military mindset which finds its fullest flowering at West Point. To this day, while many civilians think of Koster as an odious criminal, West Pointers see him as a victim of politicians looking for a scapegoat, a fine soldier and role model who, as one officer put it, "did what anyone would do." Little attempt has been made at West Point to tie the famous honor code, of which the institution is so proud, to the larger moral questions that officers may face. Students and faculty members say there never has been a formal discussion or a single class period devoted to ethical problems arising out of the Vietnam war. General Goodpaster is planning to introduce, for the first time, a structured "ethics and morality" sequence, but that may not be enough. Too many West Point instructors agree that General Koster was indeed a hero and that the military conducted itself honorably in Vietnam. These men are unprepared to offer serious guidance on matters of military ethics.

The "honor code" is one of those institutions at West Point that have been considered sacrosanct largely because of their longevity. The simple code—"A cadet will not lie, cheat or steal, nor tolerate anyone who does"—is expected to cover every possible situation. The Army's view is that the code's simplicity makes it impossible for a cadet to violate it unintentionally, that the rigidity of the code makes it immediately evident whether someone has violated it or not. For generations, those who judged honor cases have tried to maintain the fiction that there can be no grey area under the code. But when the Academy's latest cheating scandal erupted in March 1976 (the last comparable one was in the early 1950s), the honor code came under serious challenge. So many cadets were

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implicated that even military observers were forced to conclude that the Academy itself might be at fault in some way.

The 1976 incident grew out of a take-home exam in an engineering course which most cadets detested and considered useless. The temptation for cheating was great and the opportunity so available that many took advantage of it. The crime of "toleration" was even more widespread. A total of 152 cadets either resigned or were otherwise separated from the Academy. An official investigation into the incident headed by former astronaut Frank Borman concluded frankly "that many cadets who either collaborated or tolerated collaboration on the EE 304 take-home examination have not been detected or punished and that, during recent years, a substantial number of cadets have been involved in dishonesty, toleration, and, on occasion, misconduct as honor representatives."

At the recommendation of the Borman Commission and the insistence of Congress and civilians in the Pentagon—and over the vigorous opposition of both the West Point administration and the official voices of the corps of cadets itself—98 of the cadets who left the Academy because of the scandal returned to West Point this year to complete their educations. Despite their opposition, the cadets seem to have accepted the return of their former schoolmates without any outward hostility. But West Point seems not to have come to terms with the honor scandal. The only real emotion many West Pointers display about the "EE 304 incident," as it is called there, is bitterness over the intrusion of outside forces into the affairs of the Academy. The Army recognizes, however, that it must overhaul the honor code in some way, if only to placate outsiders, and some changes, at least in attitude, are evident. "I've tried to concentrate a lot of personal thought on this matter," says General Goodpaster, who on first meeting lives up to his reputation as one of the more erudite and sophisticated men in the upper ranks of the Army. "What is important is the bedrock of personal commitment and personal adherence to what we call the honor code. . . . We are trying to reduce the honor code to its essentials. We're not going to stretch it to cover ambiguous or bizarre cases."

If any West Pointers still hope the honor scandal will go away, they entertain no such illusion about the female cadets who now total 171 in the two lower classes. Some older officers still seem a bit incredulous when discussing the subject, shaking their heads in wonder that such a day could come, and many male cadets are uncomfortable with their women classmates. But most are determined to be "good soldiers" and try to make the best of what they consider a bad situation. Despite a predictably high rate of attrition, the women at West Point show good morale. In some cases, they seem more able than the men to cope with the petty aspects of cadet life without losing perspective. General Goodpaster is pleased that the Academy has attracted "a very fine grade of young women, quite comparable to the grade of our young men."

The important challenge for the administration of West Point is to try to bring the school more into step with the civilian population, to prevent it from developing or maintaining a set of norms and attitudes significantly different from those of the society it exists to defend. How can West Point be brought out of its military cocoon? Some have suggested that the fortress on the Hudson be abandoned and that cadets be trained instead at several locations around the country, preferably in cities or areas where they would be in regular contact with civilians. Others have suggested that the Army should eliminate separate cadet training entirely and rely upon ROTC training on civilian college campuses. But these suggestions are anathema to the Army because West Point's isolation is essential to their image of the Academy as a proving and training ground for the toughest of men, the elite corps that represents what an army is all about.

One of the more sensible options available to West Point—an option which is dismissed by its administrators—is to have students spend two years after high school at a civilian college or at another non-military pursuit before arriving at the military Academy. This would expose them to civilian life and give them a chance to mature and develop qualities of independence and judgment, and might produce officers better attuned to the outside world than many now appear to be. West Pointers oppose this idea because they frankly fear that a 20-year-old with two years of civilian education will be much less malleable than an 18-year-old right out of high school. To an administration that laments changes already evident in the student body ("They just aren't the same kids we were bringing in the door in 1950 or 1955"), the idea of encouraging further experimentation by students outside the walls seems counterproductive. "At this place, the survivor is the one who accomodates himself to the system," explained one officer. "The more you've seen before you get here, the less likely you are to succeed when you get here."

At the very least, adding more civilians to the faculty would be a step forward. General Goodpaster will try to place at least one civilian visiting professor in each department next year, but does "not contemplate more civilian faculty members."

What we have here is an institution that considers its survival in its present form essential to the national security. Few non-graduates or critical civilians can summon the degree of passion against the institution that its graduates and defenders offer in its favor. So it is likely that West Point will remain a model, as alumnus Dwight Eisenhower remarked (with satisfaction, one can only assume) after a visit back to the grounds, of "how little some things change."

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Arts and Lives

Stanley Kauffmann on theater

Building Trades

Golda (Morosco). Broadway is in, among other things, the construction business. This was always true, of course—vehicles were tailored for stars, topicalities were exploited—but, as in all construction these days, the size of Broadway projects has increased along with the rising costs of doing them. Who would build a four-story building on a piece of expensive real estate? Who would put an intimate musical in the Majestic? No, that house gets *The Act*, with and for Liza Minnelli. *The Act* may *look* cheap compared with the opulent musicals of the past: it has a small chorus line, only one set with a few alterations; but in budget terms it probably far outdistances any edition of the *Ziegfeld Follies*. It was built to cost and built to earn. One can't say it was written and composed: it was constructed—for Minnelli. (Badly, too. A noisy bore, full of strain and stridency.)

Golda is another construction, meant to cost, meant to earn. Much of the Broadway audience is Jewish. The state of Israel has been thoughtful enough to provide a protagonist who is motherly, wryly humorous, and very strong. So a producer acquired rights to her autobiography, and three experienced collaborators got to work: the playwright William Gibson, the director Arthur Penn, the star Anne Bancroft. One imagined a wooden fence around the expensive site where they were working, with the sign: Ready for Occupancy November 1977.

But again the construction is wobbly. This play is a patchy tour of Golda Meir's life, contained within the 19 days of the Yom Kippur War in 1973, with lots of flashbacks to her childhood and youth and marriage and previous work, jazzed up with lots of visual effects (projected photographs) and sound effects. Those effects only underscore that the whole thing would have been much more comfortable as a TV special that could have gone to different locations.

Anyone who has read Meir's autobiography will get a good deal less out of the play than the book. The enterprise merely runs some principal elements of the story through one more wringer to squeeze out tears and cash. Gibson is candid enough to subtitle his script a "partial portrait," and I suppose he's using the term in at least two meanings. He could also have called it a partial *play* because only the first of the two acts works with even any facile sentimental effect. The theatrical presentation of some facts of Golda's life and of Israeli history does draw tears in Act One. But by Act Two the impact of the stage presentation wears thin, and we just wait around with Golda and her ministers as *they* wait around for the phone call we know is coming, announcing that the counterattack is succeeding and the Suez Canal has been crossed. (The play very quickly stops there, thus avoiding the grave international crisis that followed from this Israeli success.)

Penn has done his best to impose action on this wordy pageant, which I saw at a late preview, but that's exactly how the action feels: imposed, not evoked. His real success is with a few of the actors. Anne Bancroft does very well as Golda, and I'm specially happy to say it after her recent poor work in *The Turning Point* and other films and TV things. As Golda, Bancroft naturally can't rely on a glamour that she just doesn't have, so one handicap is shed. Also she has a direct living model so it's more imitation than acting. But, equipped with gray wig, bulbous nose, swollen leg, and cricky neck, Bancroft does a forceful and authentic job. It's not a bag of tricks, like most of Hume Cronyn's performance in *The Gin Game*. Aided by the facts that she can "hide" in a different face and physique and that she can't display an Anne Bancroft longing to be loved, Bancroft works vividly. She almost holds the show together after the play as such evanesces. Penn, I'm sure, helped.

One other performance is notable. Gerald Hiken, as Golda's husband, strikes the right note from the first moment: selfhood, warmth, perception of the burden of being in love with this woman. Hiken's work is based on careful design vitalized by truth: the clear figure of a man who knows he's destined to be a footnote in the history of his wife but means to be a dignified footnote.

The Squat Theater. (Various places.) There are other kinds of construction in the theater, much more rewarding. This group is devoted to one of those other kinds. They started in Budapest in 1970 where they played, for small audiences, in one another's homes and called themselves Apartment Theater. The company numbered 13 when they emigrated in 1976 and played in Holland and England. 11 of them came to the US—two are in Paris awaiting visas—and here they changed the company's name because they were no longer playing in their homes. One of the group, Anna Koos, told me that they took their new name from US history, from the land-grant squatters of the 19th century and from Stevenson's *Silverado Squatters*.

I had read about their appearance at an avant-garde festival in Baltimore, and I went to see them recently when they were playing at Soho Books in lower Greenwich Village. The big bookshop had been bisected by curtains at right angles to the street, books on one side, theater space on the other. In most store-front theaters, the windows are covered and the shop becomes a small enclosed playing space. With Squat, the audience was seated in the back of the

Films Worth Seeing

Julia. Vanessa Redgrave, Jason Robards, and Jane Fonda, in that order of excellence, do much to knock the stuffing out of this upholstered version of Lillian Hellman's memoir.

Let Joy Reign Supreme. Witty, sexy, intelligent, and mordant. Bertrand Tavernier, who made *The Clockmaker* about modern France, goes deftly back to the French court of 1720 with some of the same superb actors.

One Sings, The Other Doesn't. Agnes Varda deals with the friendship of two young Frenchwomen today. The best film so far about New Women, warm, unpolemical, effective.

The Turning Point. On the whole, it's a hole, but this ballet story has Baryshnikov, dancing unbelievably and acting believably, as well as some other splendid dancers.

SK

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shop on a few rows of bleachers facing *forward*. The shop windows were left uncovered. All the stage action took place between the audience and the shop windows through which we could see the street—cars and trucks rolling along, an occasional taxi pulling up to discharge someone late for the performance we were seeing, passers-by who often stopped to watch from outside and to wonder. It's the best attempt I have seen at the perennial avant-garde aim to "break" the stage into the world and vice versa.

Squat has no director; all their pieces are worked out communally. I saw four of the pieces, in all of which language was minimal (and English was used). Theater of this kind—unscripted, composed of segments imagined out of or *against* a theme, a collage of associations—is outside criticism in a certain sense. Or to be more precise, as we saw in the painting of the last few decades, certain new kinds of art require their own specifically developed criticism. For instance, I can't possibly say whether these pieces were well or ill acted: the criterion is irrelevant. I can suggest their quality: and I can report that the level of invention is sufficiently fresh and fertile to keep our interest sharp.

A few highlights. The first piece is built around a reading of "The Confessions of Stavrogin," the once-suppressed chapter of *The Possessed* that deals with the violation of a child. While the reading proceeds, a small girl is affectionately and elaborately dressed on stage, a goat wanders in and is petted, these and other actions taking on colors because of what we are hearing. Outside in the street, looking through the window from behind the actors, are various passers-by who stop to chuckle, shake their heads, leave or linger. Then another passer-by strolls in, bearded, wearing a long overcoat, walking a dog. Idly he joins the other onlookers. Apparently he's just one more of them except that, when he turns, we see that the arm of his overcoat is in flames. After a few moments he walks past. A few minutes later he returns, his coat "extinguished," and he flashes it open, revealing that he's naked underneath.

The second piece is a gangster parody. During the stage action two men shoot at each other outside from opposite sides of the street while people walk past, puzzled or snickering.

In the last piece Koos reads a letter of Antonin Artaud's while a man shoves a small TV camera up her dress, complete with light, and we see her pubic hair on a screen as she reads about rebellion.

The Squat pieces have wit, an undercurrent of aggressive sexuality, brusque brushings-aside of expectation. None of the work is moving—emotion is not the aim. (Except laughter, especially in a pantomime piece with two glaziers which *is* well performed.) These are intelligent and imaginative constructions, designed to find out some kinds of things theatrical experience can be other than the traditional or the traditionally experimental. Many of the images and sequences stay vividly in the mind. This is hardly a definition of complete theater, but these pieces were stimulating in themselves and made me want to see more.

For those in or coming to New York: Squat is now playing at 8:30 on weekends at 256 West 23 St. Telephone: 691-1238.

Michael Ullman on jazz

Jazz violinist Joe Venuti is 82, 74, or even 84 years old, depending on which of his stories you choose to believe. A masterful publicist of his own past, present and future, Venuti presented Leonard Feather with the attractive tale that he was born in 1904 on the ship that brought his immigrant parents to this country. When confronted with this story, a relative of Venuti's is said to have commented, "Yea, and he was playing pretty good at the time, too." It is likely that Joe was 10 years old in 1904, and that he had been playing the violin for six years already. A short man of variable girth, Venuti is usually impeccably dressed in the style of a successful elderly businessman. He has a large bald head, an expressive wrinkled face, and powerful wrists. He practices an hour and a half a day to maintain his reflexes. Typically he has a smile on his face and a glint in his eye.

He told interviewers Shapiro and

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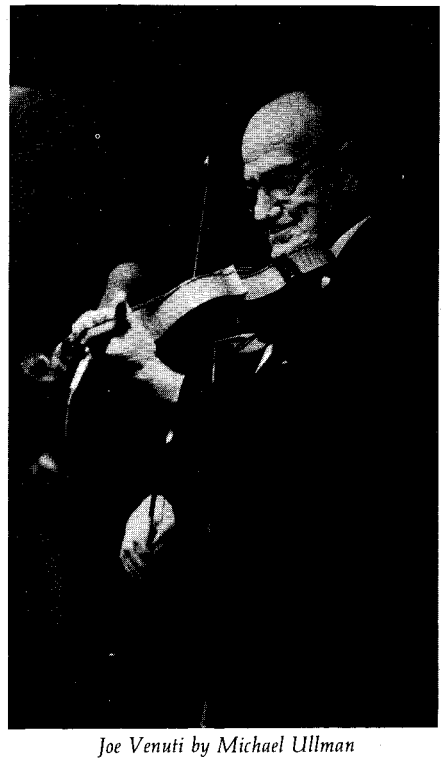
Hentoff about his early training: "I think a cousin started to teach me when I was about four. Solfeggio, of course. That's the Italian system under which you don't bother much about any special instrument until you know all the fundamentals of music. It's the only way to learn music right. Later, when I started to study fiddle seriously, I had several good teachers. I even put in six years in a conservatory" (*Hear Me Talkin' to Ya*).

Venuti's father wanted his talented son to become a classical violinist, another Paganini. Joe's classical training was rigorous: when I asked him about it recently, he responded by crossing himself and looking towards the heavens. He says that his father did not take his cross-over into popular music lightly, knocking Joe around the head every time the youngster began to swing. Venuti's first important job as a jazz musician was with the wonderful Jean Goldkette band, an organization trumpeter Rex Stewart called the greatest swing band of its era, better than the Fletcher Henderson group with which Stewart performed. With Goldkette, Venuti was suddenly making a lot of money, and like a dutiful son, he sent much of it home to Philadephia. His suspicious father chased him down, but it was too late to change Joe Venuti's ways, and anyway, the old man was relieved his son wasn't stealing the money.

Joe Venuti went to school in Philadelphia with Eddie Lang, born Salvatore Massaro, one of the first great jazz guitarists. Venuti played with Lang until the latter's death following an unnecessary tonsillectomy in 1933. As young boys, Venuti and Lang learned to improvise together: not by playing jazz, but by working out impromptu variations on the Italian tunes the boys performed at dances. Venuti recalls these days in *Hear Me Talkin' to Ya:* "You know, Eddie and I went all through grammar school and high school together. We used to play a lot of mazurkas and polkas. Just for fun we started to play them in four-four. I guess we just like the rhythm of the guitar. Then we started to slip in some improvised passages. I'd slip something in. Eddie would pick it up with a variation. Then I'd come back with a variation. We'd just sit there and knock each other out."

Until Lang died in 1933, he and Venuti were almost inseparable. They recorded with Goldkette, Whiteman, and with groups of their own, including the famous Joe Venuti Blue Four. While most of the Lang-Venuti performances are now unavailable, we can hear three of these intimate but spirited performances on Tom Records, Number Seven. The gently swinging "Apple Blossoms" begins as Venuti states the melody, drifting effortlessly into harmonics at the end of a phrase, demonstrating his superb technique without the strutting show-time effects common to the earliest jazz virtuosos. It is performances like these which, according to Richard Hadlock, "represent a pioneer effort to present chamber jazz with a minimum of unmusical effects or superfluous vocals and without any pretense of its being anything but music for *listening*" (*Jazz Masters of the Twenties*). The Venuti-Lang experiments which began as variations on popular dances



Joe Venuti by Michael Ullman

eventually helped take jazz out of its accompanist's role.

No gentle tune can illustrate the most characteristic Venuti playing. The 1931 version of "After You're Gone," recorded with Benny Goodman and available under Jack Teagarden's name (MCA 227) features a relaxed vocal by Teagarden that demonstrates the influence of Louis Armstrong in its trumpet style phrasing, vocal smears, and tumbling decrescendos. After this vocal, the piece moves into doubletime as Venuti takes over authoritatively, flinging dramatic phrases at top volume over a background that is suddenly enlivened. A critic has aptly dubbed Venuti's music "hard swing." No Venuti phrase is without its heavy accents and powerful thrust. He likes to surprise, which he does sometimes by playing a straight version of Dvorak's *Humoresque* in the middle of a jazz set, and he builds surprises into most of his solos. A recent version of "Sweet Georgia Brown," performed with guitarist George Barnes, begins with some harmless noodling on the violin which just barely suggests the melody. Venuti then repeats some patterned rhythmic phrases that are traded off with Barnes. Joe continues to tantalize the audience with what is obviously an introduction until suddenly he leaps into an uptempo, jived-up statement of the infectious melody. After his accompanists' solos, Joe comes back to trade phrases, and he finishes by riffing as if he were a whole big band. Most of Venuti's uptempo performances end with this kind of playing, which is meant to contrast with the long single note phrases of his improvisations.

The aggressiveness of this solo is typical of Venuti: he loves to compete with other musicians. In his 1975 performance at Newport, Venuti performed with Vic Dickenson, Earl Hines, Red Norvo and others, tipping his bow at each to tell them when to solo, and saving the final spot for himself. He blew them all away with "Sweet Georgia Brown."

Famous as he is for his music, Venuti was once more well known for his pranks. The late Bing Crosby experienced both Joe's music and his wit. In his autobiography, *Call Me Lucky,* Bing says of the former: "High on my personal list of memorable moments are the great duets of Joe Venuti and Eddie Lang." But Joe's personality clearly made Bing a little wary. Crosby devotes most of a chapter to Venuti's practical jokes, which include throwing a piano out a third story window to find out what its basic note was: no one agreed, so all bets were off. Bing describes the young Venuti in this way: "Joe's a voluble, volatile, and violent Italian. He's very loud, very noisy, and very given to telling fantastic stories about himself and his family . . . Joes likes everything with *beaucoup* volume. He told me once he would have liked to have been a tympanist but if he had, he would have had to use hatchets for whatever a tympanist uses for drumsticks." The hatchet image, nonsensical as it is, suggests that the soft-spoken Bing was intimidated.

Venuti still flares up occasionally, but he rarely lights up a whole stage on fire as he once did when a Cincinatti country club owner refused to heat his dance hall adequately. He is healthy,

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spry and tough. In the past few years, he has been playing around the country with musicians 40 or 50 years younger than himself. He is a hero to many. Spiegle Wilcox, a trombonist who played with Joe in the Jean Goldkette Orchestra of the late '20s, shows up at engagement after engagement of Venuti's, buttonholing members of the audience to tell them how great Joe really is. When Spiegle takes a chorus on trombone, Venuti stands beside him and smiles benevolently, obviously thinking that it is wonderful that someone Wilcox's age can even make a sound.

Luckily, Venuti has also been recording regularly on various labels. He made three albums with Zoot Sims (Chiaroscuro 134, 142, 128), and one with the inimitable Earl Hines, the other swing era musician who combines Venuti's technical mastery with his near manic forcefulness (Chiaroscuro 145). A more sophisticated, gentler Venuti is found on the duet album he made with Marian McPartland (Hal-112). His most recent album is a set of duets with Dave McKenna, a pianist whose large hands move comfortably through any jazz style. And Venuti has made a pleasant album with some Italian musicians (Vanguard 79396). But probably the best place to start listening to recent Joe Venuti is with the "Sweet Georgia Brown" recorded at the Concord Jazz Festival. There, Joe is performing with a pliant rhythm section before a large, enthusiastic crowd. Needless to say, Joe Venuti's recorded works offer a unique opportunity for lovers of jazz history: for instance, one can compare two of his solos on the tune "Dinah," one recorded in 1973 with Marian McPartland and the other in 1926 with Jean Goldkette.

And one should try to see Venuti live. He's retained his sense of humor. At The Jazz Revival, a club in Beverly, Massachusetts, owner Sandy Berman asked Joe to tell a few stories to the audience. Venuti proceeded to tell of the night his manager Max came to Sandy's, said hello, and explained who he was. "Four dollars," Sandy replied. Having told his story, Venuti then played a couple choruses of the sentimental ballad, "What Are You Doing for the Rest of Your Life," pausing in the middle of a phrase to say "four dollars." At odd times later in the evening, Venuti would hold up four fingers, or mouth "four dollars." He is not one to let an opportunity pass. Like Davy Crockett, he can out-talk, out-eat, out-drink, and presumably out-wrestle any man he comes across. And he plays up a storm.

The Year's Books

(Part II)

David Hackett Fischer on history

In America today, some 25,000 historians are professionally employed—more, by one estimate, than in the rest of the world put together. The number is growing. The annual number of PhD's graduated in 1970 was greater than the total number of PhD's working in 1920.

One might ask what this vast establishment has done to justify its existence. The answer, for the past generation, was not very much—not nearly enough. The median number of books produced by professional historians in a lifetime of labor was one. Both the quantity and quality of output were very low.

But that was the last generation. Today, things are changing. At a time, ironically, when the "job crisis" for new PhD's has never been worse, the quality of their work has never been better. A revolution has happened in historical writing—an improvement so sudden in its development and so sweeping in its effect that one colonial historian has compared it with the Great Awakening.

"Fifteen years ago," Geoffrey Barraclough writes, ". . . historical science was sunk in a deep rut churned by the ponderous cart-wheels of 19th century historiography." Today, young historians are rocketing along at a great rate, driven by a new purpose, supported by a new technology, sustained by a new confidence in their calling which is stronger than at any time since the 19th century.

The old history was a story-telling art. Its stories were mostly about past power elites, drawn from documentary sources and delivered to the reader in the form of personal testimony. The new history isn't about the past at all, but change—with past and present in a mutual perspective. It isn't a story-telling but a problem-solving discipline. And its problems are about the ordinary acts and thoughts of ordinary people—people in society. The new history is about structures, systems, processes, patterns of behavior. Its evidence is taken from a variety of sources, and offered not as testimony but argument.

The new history is new also in its politics. "It is generally accepted," the Chinese historian Cheng Te-k'un observes, "that the writing of history is more or less a political act." The politics of history in America are changing—becoming more radical. From Bancroft to Morison, American history was written by gentleman-whigs. From Morison to Schlesinger, it was done (nearly to death) by New Deal Liberals. A few decades ago, radical history in America was poor stuff—thin, shrill, polemical. But now, radical history is coming of age. A new generation of radical historians has begun to publish its big books, and they are very good books indeed. A few are great books—creative, mature, restrained, carefully researched, cogently argued, informed by a coherent "problematic" and pointed toward a serious social purpose which liberal historians have lost. Witness recent works by Gutman and Genovese, Gordon and Horwitz, Ewen and Noble, discussed below. Liberals still dominate the field by force of numbers. But the maturation of Marxist history in America is a major intellectual event.

History today is new also in its sophistication. It is intricate in its empirical methods, complex in its apparatus of proof, recondite in its technical vocabulary, esoteric in its learning. In the past, historians made a virtue of simplicity, and tried to speak plainly to a larger public. That ambition survives today, but it is increasingly difficult to attain. The new history is becoming inaccessible to the general reader.

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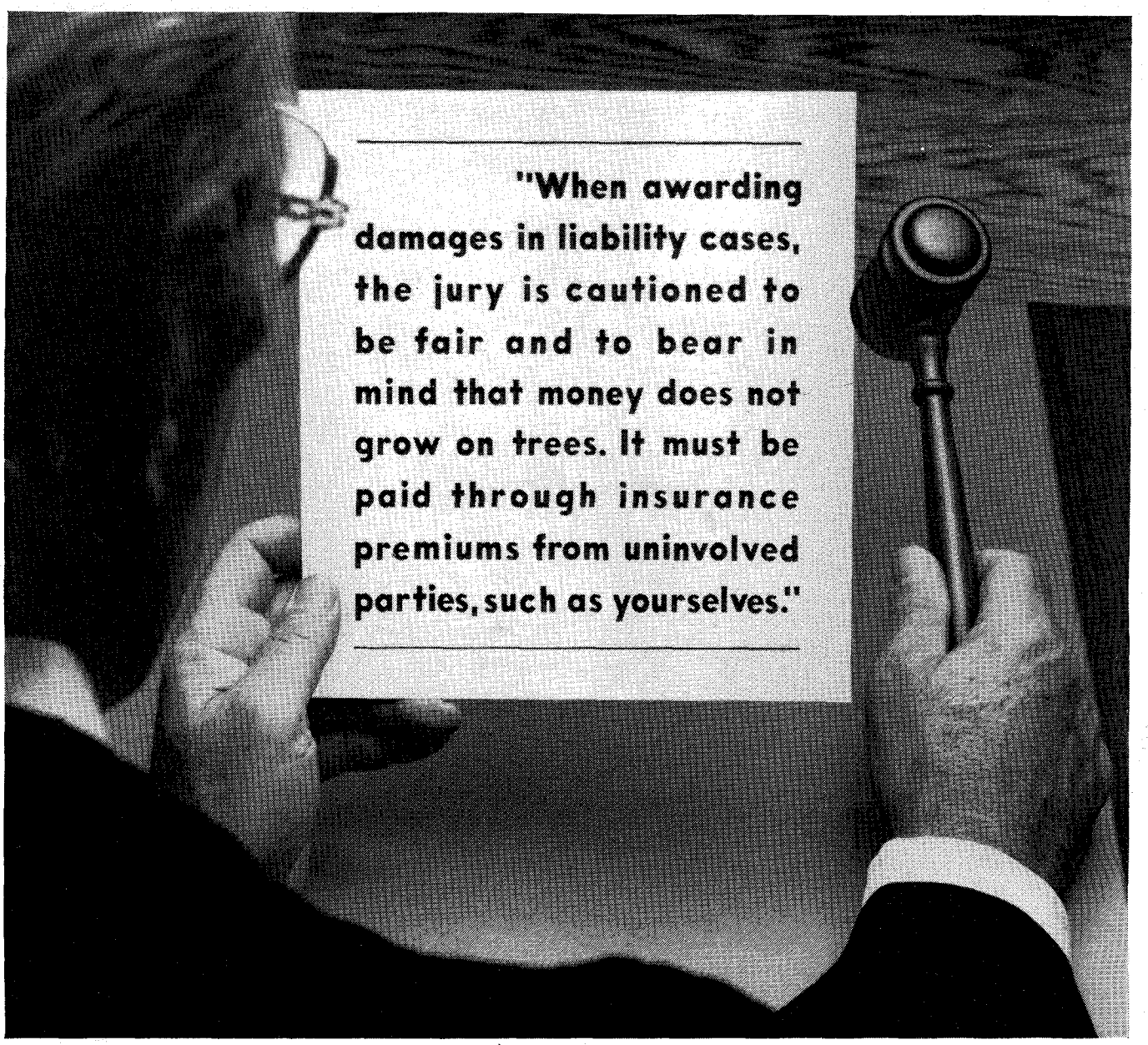
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remaining years of his life expectancy. He had been earning about $10,000 a year. The jury awards him a sum equal to almost $89,000 a year.[1]

Then there's the one...but *you* can probably provide the next example. Most of us know hair-raising stories of windfall awards won in court.[2] Justified claims should be compensated, of course. Ætna's point is that it is time to look hard at what windfall awards are costing.[3]

What can we do? Several things:

We can stop assessing "liability" where there really *was* no fault—and express our sympathy for victims through other means.

We can ask juries to take into account a victim's *own* responsibility for his losses. And we can urge that awards realistically reflect the actual loss suffered—that they be a fair *compensation,* but not a reward.[4]

Insurers, lawyers, judges—each of us shares some blame for this mess. But it is you, the public, who can best begin to clean it up. Don't underestimate your own influence. Use it, as we are trying to use ours.

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1 The man was awarded $1,250,000, or about $89,000 a year, for the remaining 14 years of his life expectancy. The jury awarded an extra $500,000 to his wife for loss of "consortium"—the company, affection and services of her husband.

2 A by-product of such awards has been a quantum leap in the number of personal injury and property damage suits filed. A 1977 study in California shows such suits increasing at *five times the rate of population growth.*

3 Most awards are paid by insurance, and insurance companies spend millions more defending policyholders against lawsuits. The direct result is rising premiums for automobile and other liability coverages. The *indirect* result is higher prices for goods and services—prices which are boosted to cover the skyrocketing insurance premiums of manufacturers, doctors, hospitals, and others who are targets for windfall awards.

4 For example, it would help if juries were simply required to take into account payments the claimant has already received for medical bills and lost wages. Under the present system, these bills may be paid all over again.

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It is also inaccessible for another reason. History has been largely abandoned by commercial publishers. A few keep active. Norton has a strong list. Knopf preserves its interest in the subject. Oxford, increasingly, leads the field. Its able editor, Sheldon Meyer, is widely regarded by historians as the Alfred Knopf of the present generation. But by and large, the publishing industry has not supported the new history. There aren't enough dollars in it.

America's literary institutions are dominated by the dollar. They show little interest in books that don't pay. As a result, the new history is not much reviewed. It is not stocked by most bookstores, or bought by most libraries, or sold by most bookclubs. And it isn't being taught in the schools.

These things will change. There is always a lag between innovation and diffusion. But for the present, it is virtually impossible for a general reader to know what is happening in history. Many things are happening—many good books have been published in the past year that deserve a wide reading.

In family history, three major works have appeared. Peter Laslett's *Family Life and Illicit Love in Earlier Generations* (Cambridge; $24.50), is a collection of essays by a self-styled "historical sociologist." It contains a body of quantitative research that has revolutionized the field. Laslett demonstrates that the nuclear family was a normal unit of residence in western Europe and America at least 200 years before industrialization. He also describes patterns of change through the past three centuries in bastardy, age-relations, family cohesion, the life cycle, and a variety of other subjects. It is work of high importance. After the labors of Laslett and his "Cambridge Group" a dozen academic disciplines will never be the same. His lapidary essays are the foundation stones of family history.

More ambitious, but less successful, is Lawrence Stone's lively new book, *Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (Harper; $30). It argues that family relations were cold and cruel in the 16th and 17th centuries, and that a revolution occurred, *circa* 1660, with the growth of "affective individualism" between parents and children, and husbands and wives. Stone believes that the new trend had nothing to do with industrialization or "modernization," and that it reversed after 1800. Stone's academic reviewers (including this one) have not been entirely convinced. At the crucial points his evidence is thin and anecdotal. Still, the book is worth reading for its anecdotes alone. And if its main thesis is mistaken, many of its parts will survive. It is an important, intelligent and attractive book, and marvellously readable.

Christopher Lasch has just published a brilliant little book called *Haven in a Heartless World* (Basic Books; $12.95), which is a history of the family in modern society. He argues that as

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society has grown "more savage and warlike," the family has become increasingly valued as "the last refuge of love and decency," but at the same time it has also become less able to function in that way. The result is increasing strain in family-ideals and family-realities. There is also a little strain in Lasch's argument, both in his rosy idea of traditional society (he writes of priests and kinds as "benevolent father figures") and in his bleak image of modern civilization as a form of savagery. Still as an analyst of social science literature on the family, Lasch is superb. On balance, his book is the best essay available today on the modern history of the family.

In the history of education, Lawrence Cremin's *Traditions of American Education* (Basic Books; $8.95), is a little book of large importance. Cremin, now serving as president of Teachers College, somehow keeps working on one of the great historical projects of our time—a massive history of American education. His present book summarizes in 128 pages the main lines of an intricate argument which will fill three volumes before it is done. The result is an excellent short survey of American educational history, organized around three themes: the transplanting of colonial institutions; the growth of a special popular *paideia* in the New Republic; and the transformation of the school by urbanization. Cremin's interpretation is specified in three case studies—a factory town in Massachusetts, a frontier settlement in Illinois and the pine belt district in South Carolina. His book is the best brief introduction to the history of education which is presently in print.

On the history of higher education, Bruce Kuklick's *Rise of American Philosophy* (Yale; $17.95) is also absolutely first class—a study of academic philosophy at Harvard from 1860 to 1930 and an essay in "the history of difficult ideas." It is a fascinating book, for the ideas themselves, for its extraordinary figures (Peirce, James, Royce, Whitehead, C.I. Lewis), but most of all for the story it tells of the movement "from Scottish realism and Aristotelian logic" in the 19th century to pragmatism and symbolic logic in the 20th. Kuklick also tells another tale, about how philosophy became a profession. The result was a new level of technical sophistication, but also a new scholasticism. Philosophy sharpened its own tools in the process, but it made itself incomprehensible to laymen and irrelevant to other fields. It abdicated its role as the great integrating discipline.

A kind of counterpoint to Kuklick's narrative is a story told by Thomas Haskell in *The Emergence of Professional Social Science* (Illinois; $12.50), a thoughtful history of the American Social Science Association from 1865 to 1909. Haskell describes the growth of new forms of society in modern America, and the invention of social science as a new way of studying it. It is an excellent book, much broader than its ostensible subject suggests.

Another developing field might be called biohistory—the history of *homo biologicus*—man, the knowing animal. A formidable literature has recently appeared in this area, mostly on the history of sex and death. Some of it is very good work. David Stannard's new book on *The Puritan Way of Death* (Oxford, $11.95) is a bellwether book—an intelligent and highly original study of 17th century attitudes toward death, which were profoundly different from those in our own time. Stannard's object is not merely to understand that period but to provide a perspective on the present. He succeeds admirably. The book rests upon a strong command of social science literature and is written with style and grace.

Linda Gordon's *Woman's Body, Woman's Right* (Grossman; $12.95) is an excellent

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social history of birth control in America from a radical feminist point of view—a history of the struggle for "reproductive self determination." The early chapters are weak, but the main body of the book on birth control from the 1870's to the present is of high quality. Based on deep research, the agrument is thoughtful and persuasive. In Gordon's book, as in Stannard's, history becomes a bridge between the past and present.

Hal D. Sears's, *The Sex Radicals* (Kansas; $15), is a lively history of free love in Victorian America. In tone and content, it is a curiously bifurcated book. On one level it is hot dog history, as wild and free as some of its protagonists. As dog-owners resemble their dogs, historians resemble their subjects. But on another level it reports careful and serious research about a problem of deep significance. Sexual radicalism intersected with many major social processes in Victorian America and was important for its own sake. Sears's books is informative, and glorious great fun to read.

Women's history, a field dominated by manifestos, is the subject of two monographs this year. Nancy Cott's *The Bonds of Womanhood: Woman's Sphere in New England, 1780-1835* (Yale; $12.50) describes the rise of "domesticity," a pejorative term in most feminist works. But the author shows that a necessary precondition for the growth of feminism was an idea of femininity which the domestic revolution largely created. The "bonds of womanhood" tied women down, but also tied them together—a major revision in women's history.

Ann Douglas's *Feminization of American Culture* (Knopf; $15), is a dazzling book, with a different thesis. Working from literary materials, she argues that a curious sort of cultural alliance was formed in Victorian America between women and the clergy, who combined to create a mass literature which sentimentalized and "feminized" social relations and cultural forms in a variety of destructive ways. As a rounded interpretation of 19th century American culture the argument is not convincing. There are too many female writers, and clergy too, who don't fit the Douglean mold. But if we understand her chosen theme as one trend among many in that great bundle of countervailing tendencies which was Victorian America, then it works brilliantly. In any case, the book is continuously valuable for its insights into attitudes toward old age, death, religion, morals, and much more. It is a book to be studied rather than read. But it handsomely repays the effort.

So also does a very old monograph, Julia Cherry Spruill's *Women's Life & Work in the Southern Colonies* (Norton; $3.95), first published in 1938 and now reissued in a paperback. It is a marvelous book, full of ripe learning on its subject, and a continuous pleasure to read. *Women's Life and Work* demonstrates that not all history must be rewritten. It is a classic that will never be "revised" or superseded.

In black history three contemporary classics are now in paperback. Fogel and Engerman's *Time on the Cross* (Little Brown; $5.95), has received intense and often erroneous criticism, and emerged with its major conclusions more or less intact. It is a sound and solid book, now rapidly gaining in reputation. Herbert Gutman's *Black Family in Slavery and Freedom* (Vintage; $6.95), is a great, shambling, slovenly compendium, and also a work of genius on the ideals (not the reality) of the black family in America. Eugene Genovese's *Roll, Jordan, Roll* (Vintage; $5.95) is a beautiful book, strong on the subject of slave religion.

A fourth book published this year is worthy company for those three great works. Lawrence Levine's *Black Culture and Black Consciousness* (Oxford; $15.95) is an enthralling history of black folklore, one of the first books by an historian to exploit those materials systematically, with stunning effect. The book is compulsively readable, and profoundly important for an understanding of black history.

Economic history has been dominated by econometrics. But this year three nonstatistical books lead the list. Alfred Chandler's *Visible Hand* (Harvard-Belknap; $18.50), is a revolutionary work. Business history in the past was largely about entrepreneurs—either as "robber barons" or "industrial statesmen." Chandler shifts the spotlight from the promoters to the managers. He argues that the organization of capitalist enterprise was much the same in America in 1840 as it had been in the *quattrocento*—family partners, single units, personal exchange, slow communications. A "managerial revolution" began in the 1840's, after the invention of the railroads. With the growth of high volume production and distribution, elaborate hierarchies of management began to develop. Those structures were later integrated (circa 1880-1914) into great systems which were more or less mature by World War I. They have dominated American business ever since. *The Visible Hand* is a superb book—a triumph of creative synthesis.

It is interesting to compare Chandler with another book by David Noble, who surveys a similar subject from a radical point of view. *America by Design: Science, Technology and the Rise of Corporate Capitalism* (Knopf; $12.95), discusses the role of the engineer as the servant of the capitalist. Noble connects two major themes—the growth of modern technology and the rise of corporate capitalism in America. He argues that engineers applied their expertise primarily to capitalistic purposes—to profit-taking, labor-saving and managerial control rather than to the humane organization of the workplace. The patent system was transformed from a device for protecting the lone inventor to a device which served corporate institutions. Scientific research laboratories became instruments for business control of technology. And universities became employment agencies for the corporation. Noble's thesis is weak in its critical links, but the central thesis is provocative, and probably correct.

Another work of high quality is Stuart Ewen's *Captains of Consciousness* (McGraw Hill; $4.95), a fascinating Marxist

Edited by ALAN NED SABROSKY

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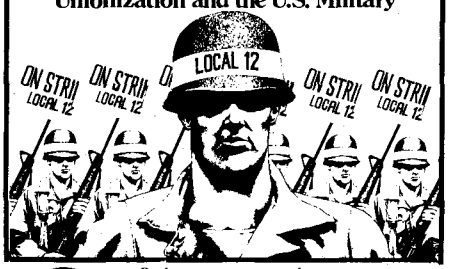

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history of American advertising. Some years ago, David Potter did an essay on advertising as the institutionalization of abundance. Ewen sees it as an instrument of social control—a subliminal school of capitalist values. One reviewer has advised Ewen not to walk alone on Madison Avenue.

One of the liveliest fields this year is the history of law. Two new books show the direction that subject is taking. Morton Horwitz's *Transformation of American Law* (Harvard; $16.50) describes how the American legal system was remodeled between 1780 and 1860 to serve two major purposes, one "instrumental," the other "expropriative." Law promoted entrepreneurship and economic growth, but also enabled "emergent entrepreneurial and commercial groups to win a disproportionate share of wealth and power in American society."

Horwitz's thesis is carefully developed in a close analysis of the law of contracts and property, and a sociological study of lawyers and merchants, and much more. The book is highly technical, but a reader who is not deterred by detail will find it a fascinating work. Its discussion of the law of water courses, to pick one unlikely example, is a brilliant exercise of the historical imagination.

If Horwitz is a lawyer who has discovered history, Morton Keller is an historian who has discovered the law. Keller's excellent new book, *Affairs of State* (Harvard-Belknap; $17.50) is a history of American policy—the legal and political system—from 1865 to 1900. A second volume is promised to carry the story into the 20th century. Keller works largely from primary legal materials, and from an unrivaled command of the secondary literature. His interpretation is a classical example of "continuity history," which describes the stabilizing effect of political and legal institutions in the face of rapid urban and industrial growth. *Affairs of State* is absolutely first-class—broadly informed, beautifully written, by all odds the best history of modern American politics that is presently available. An indispensable book.

The most difficult problem in social history is putting the pieces together. Several important synthetic works have appeared this year. Among the best are two extraordinary books in French history. The finest histories I've read this year are Theodore Zeldin's *France 1848-1945* (2 vols., Oxford; $50), and Eugen Weber's *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford; $20). Zeldin's book is a history of feeling in France, an urbane, rambling, and incredibly learned history of such improbable subjects as ambition, love, anxiety, beauty, bad taste, boredom, and other themes which are at once central to our own experience and yet resistant to historical study. That Zeldin could discuss them at all is remarkable; that he could discuss them well is miraculous. He did so by means of the most laborious research. Yet the literary result is so fluent and lively that it carries the reader effortlessly along. Zeldin's book is truly a work of genius.

Equally distinguished is Weber's book. Zeldin knows French culture very well in one way; Weber knows it better in another—its villages, its regions, its local variations. His book is a history of social change in the French countryside, and it is a splendid work of synthesis. Its description of the destruction of a traditional way of life is eloquent and deeply moving.

Many works might be added to this list. Old fashioned books are still being published—Fritz Stern's *Gold and Iron: Bismark, Bleichroder and the Building of the German Empire* (Knopf; $17.95) and Simon Schama's *Patriots and Liberators: Revolution in the Netherlands, 1780-1813* (Knopf; $20), are two good specimens of traditional history, which appeared this year.

Historical geography is coming to life again, after a long sleep. The most remarkable work is a new *Atlas of Early American History* (Princeton; $125), edited by Lester Cappon and the gifted cartographers of the Newberry Library. It is a sumptuous volume, full of fascinating social information. Its maps of early American cities are among the most beautiful specimens of historical cartography which I have ever seen—drawn with the delicacy of 18th century maps, but with the clarity of cartography in our own times. A magnificent work.

A few historical fields are sleeping soundly: not much was published this year in constitutional history, or diplomacy or military affars. But the remarkable fact about the historical renaissance is it breadth of base. It is said that the first Great Awakening was great because it was general. So it is today, in the great awakening of history.

David Hackett Fischer is Professor of History at Brandeis University.

Brigitte Weeks on children's books

Books for the very young are less opulent these days and splashes of color are rare. But if imagination rises to the occasion and fills the gap, then the high cost of printing will have had an unexpected bonus. One small-format wordless picture book *is* in full color and has real old-fashioned charm: *The Surprise Picnic* by John S. Goodall (Atheneum; $4.95). A cat and her kittens set off for a picnic and encounter adventure. The full-page paintings are interspersed with half pages that cunningly lead the eye on through the little story, leaving plenty of room for imagination on the part of both parent and child. The same is true for Peter Spier's repicturing of *Noah's Ark* (Doubleday; $6.95) which is built around the artist's translation of a 17th-century Dutch poem. The vividly detailed pictures by themselves tell the story if necessary, giving the book a wide age appeal.

(Before moving on to picture books at the beginning of reading, spanning the four to eight age group, let's slip in a book for the one to three—the rip-up crowd. *Pat the Bunny* by Dorothy Kunhardt (Golden; $3.95) is not new but is certainly hard to beat—touch, smell, familiar things. Little ones love it.)

William Steig of *The New Yorker* produces picture books with the subtlety and sophistication children deserve. *Caleb and Kate* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $7.95) manages to weave marital accord and discord plus magical transformation into a story with just the right mixture of anger, fear, suspense and a happy resolution. The pinks and purples and

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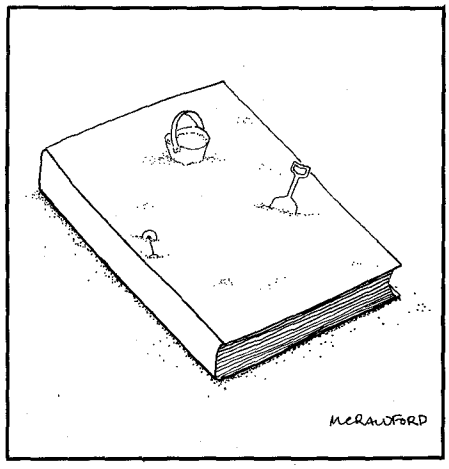
gray of the drawing deepen the atmosphere of fairy-tale.

Not to be missed are two picture books from the talented and prolific Lobel family. *Mouse Soup* (Harper & Row; $3.95), written and illustrated by Arnold, is a simple collection of tales told by a smart mouse to keep himself out of the weasel's soup pot. The soft yellow and blue illustrations fascinate children. They return to them again and again and learn every detail of each story by heart. Equally appealing is the Lobel's joint



Drawing by Michael Crawford

effort. He wrote and she illustrated *How the Rooster Saved the Day* (Greenwillow; $6.95). A robber attempts to kidnap the rooster responsible for awakening the sun each morning, but he is outwitted by the wily bird. A thief is a familiar ogre to children and they love to see him thwarted. The formally framed illustrations are bursting with energy and orange hues.

An unusual picture book that will find a smaller but no less enthusiastic audience is *The Story of Edward* by Philippe Dumas (Parents' Magazine Press; $5.95, $1.95 paperback). The tale of Edward the dancing donkey and his attempts to infiltrate the world of humans is set in France and thus has a foreign flavor that appeals to some children. Edward sets off to seek his fortune and ends up, in true fairy-tale style, with a beautiful young donkey wife and a row of little donks.

A rich grandmother or an indulgent philanthropist could do no better this Christmas than to give the quintessential booktrove for the under nines. The Beatrix Potter Complete Classic Set contains all 23 little volumes about the endearing, spunky animals created by that shy 19th-century spinster, from *Peter Rabbit* to *Pigling Bland*. It costs $60 (from Frederick Warne), but it's an investment for several generations.

Writers who can strike just the right note to reach the "middle readers," the eight to 12 set, are rare. The vocabulary must be reasonably simple but condescension is death. Three writers who use humor to creep in under the prickly guard of this skeptical age have new books out this year. Bernard Waber writes for very much the younger end of the spectrum: the advanced picture book crowd or those older children who are daunted by a mass of print. *Good-bye, Funny Dumpy-Lumpy* (Houghton Mifflin; $6.95) is a collection of five stories about a turn-of-the-century cat family that has remarkably universal problems with elderly relatives, shabby furniture (Dumpy-Lumpy is a beloved family sofa) and even an uncle who drinks a little too much. The charcoal drawings have just the whimsical detail of the text.

A big step up in reading level and length, but again using humor to draw the reader out of himself, is Daniel Manus Pinkwater's *The Hoboken Chicken Emergency* (Prentice-Hall; $5.95). This highly idiosyncratic author-illustrator puts the town of Hoboken under siege when Arthur goes to collect the Thanksgiving turkey and comes back with a 266-pound chicken. The looney adventures of Arthur and Henrietta the chicken cater precisely to the transition from fairy-tale to space wars, and the drawings are as zany as the text.

Beverly Cleary too knows how to entrance those middle readers and once having ensnared them, she makes them laugh—an enviable gift. *Ramona and her Father* (Morrow; $6.50) is perfect for any child who has already romped with Ramona in other Cleary books, or a sure way to introduce a new friend. Adults may wonder what all the fuss is about, but Ramona is such a mess—and such a comfort.

The last choice for this group, *Kilroy and the Gull* by Nathaniel Benchley (Harper & Row; $4.95), is the fictional adventures of Kilroy the killer whale who spends some time in captivity but eventually escapes and rejoins his pod. Kilroy is a lively whale with an eye for the ridiculous but tucked into his account of his friendship with a seagull is a wealth of information about the life of the seas. The blending of fact and fiction is done superbly and the result is substantial fare.

It seems almost presumptuous to name novels for teenagers—of course, almost any good book for an adult is a good book for a teenager. But it does work the other way around too, and I have thoroughly enjoyed reading all the novels described here. *Alan and the Animal Kingdom* by Isabelle Holland (Lippincott; $6.95) is the story of a city kid, his animals, and his attempts to make it on his own. Children love orphan stories and Alan's love for his animals and his efforts to deal with the adult world on its own terms strike a response in young readers who feel they know just what his problems are like. Alan lives in New York City. Across the continent in San Francisco Chinese-American Casey is on her own. In *Child of the Owl* by Laurence Yep (Harper & Row; $5.95), she is unceremoniously dumped with grandmother Paw Paw in Chinatown, where suddenly she becomes aware of being Chinese and yet not Chinese. The honesty and guts of these two kids appeal to readers while raising useful questions and telling a good story.

Two other novels with rural settings have the same kind of gut appeal: *Trial Valley* by Vera and Bill Cleaver (Lippincott; $6.95) is a sequel to *Where the Lilies Bloom*, although it also stands alone. Sixteen-year-old Mary Call Luther struggles alone in the mountains of southern Appalachia to raise her brother and sister. Life is complicated by the discovery of another orphan (a small boy) imprisoned in a chicken coop. Young people like to read of their peers who did, in fact, make it alone without the support of families. It is reassuring to know it can be done and time and time again the theme occurs in books that elicit strong emotional reactions. *Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson (Crowell; $7.95) is also enacted against a background of rural poverty. Hero Jess finds himself alone even within his family. There's little time for being together when survival is the priority. He finds a friend in Leslie who has moved from the city, and they create a world of their own—a world that is rudely shattered by her death and from which Jess emerges painfully to make a new beginning. The moving story is a compliment to the compassion and understanding of young readers.

Three books of nonfiction should be slipped in before the close. *Castle* (Houghton Mifflin; $8,95), David Macaulay's visual unfolding of how a medieval castle came to be, is both fascinating and informative for any age. Jill Krementz's *A Very Young Rider* (Knopf; $8.95) tells in words and photographs the story of Vivi Malloy and her pony Ready Penny, making every young equestrian's dreams come to life. Finally, for a family of children perhaps, the *Dictionary for Children* (Macmillan; $10.95) is clear, bright, selective-

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ly illustrated in color and makes meeting words a lot of fun. Whole sentences show how they can be used. A new edition has just been published.

It's been a good year. If the elves get at least some of these books to the children this Christmas the television won't stand a chance.

Brigitte Weeks is managing editor of *The Washington Post*'s "Book World."

Thomas J. Cottle on behavior

Christmas seems an appropriate time to review some of the year's better books. The Christmas season constitutes a classical tradition, a purposeful repetition of experiences, a legitimate imitation of the past, a period where aggressive generosity, ritualized exchanges of devotion, and all varieties of obedience and compliance veritably flourish. And money underwrites the whole affair.

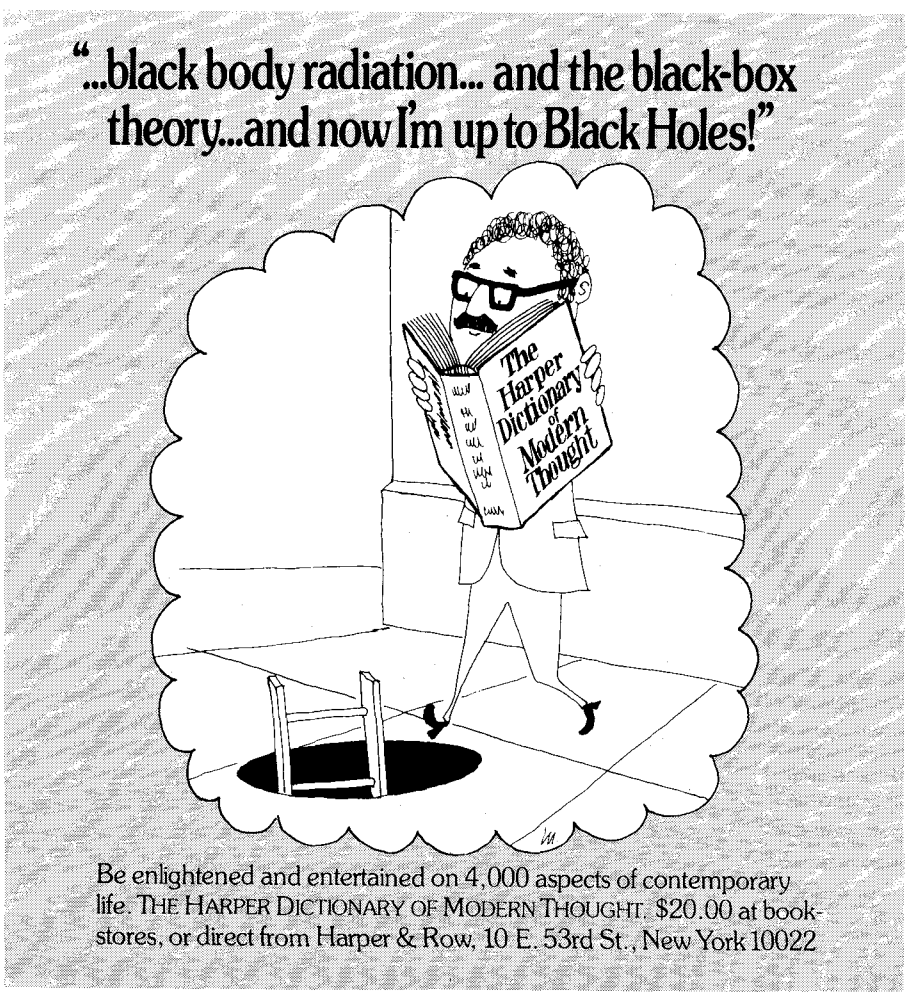
Social scientists have studied Christmas, and book buying patterns, and traditions, and devotion, but most especially they study us, and why it is we are what we are, before Christmas, as well as after Christmas. They study reasons for social and psychological action, or individual or collective motivation, and they outline, in varying degrees of gracefulness, elegance and wit, the evolution of cultures, traditions, peoples, single minds. When the assessments and searching are completed, we receive the results. And in the social sciences they come at us in tons, megatons even, of hard and soft data, dry and damp data. Where, I wonder, is the end of it? Where, for that matter, was the beginning? How have we reached this point?

Branko Kokun's *Man: The Fallen Ape* (Doubleday; $7.95) answers some of these questions. It raises a slew more. His perspective is absolutely fascinating. For him, man, armed with modern, abstract thinking, a rational and obedient mind, and dripping with infantile self infatuation, has made for himself one of the most pathetic attempts at working out working, and living out living, the animal kingdom, and queendom, has ever witnessed. Driven by a need to compete, reproduce and literally choke himself in the vices of orgiastic pleasures, he barely manages to creep through the few years granted to him, wholly unaware of the puerile and undeveloped patterns his mind, family and society are obliged to respect. His creative and self fulfilling instincts are lost so early he barely recognizes their shadows in literature and the arts. His desire to consume, own or manipulate people, objects, and ideas, and his worshipful adoration of power and the powerful make him the wondrously energized preadolescent, if not outright infant Bokun believes him to be.

But let it be noted that Bokun, in this stimulating volume, is not ignorant of the political implications of that scintillating term, man. To the contrary. What he says about man does not hold for women. With women, the consumate adapter, the quintessential preserver of the species, lies the hope of nothing short of survival, unless she pursues her present course of envious imitation of the male. As the female ape led her partner out of the savannah, so must contemporary woman lead her helplessly narcissistic partner, and adversaries, out of the infantile styles, slumbers and strategies they have piteously concocted for themselves.

Some of these styles and strategies congeal in the form of a modern complex bureaucracy, the type sociologist Rosabeth Moss Kanter examined in *Men and Women of the Corporation* (Basic Books; $12). A scholarly, thorough and exceptional inquiry, the book demonstrates the dynamics imposed on people by the regulations, norms and traditions of bureaucratic culture. With clarity and strength, Kanter discusses power, its place in the fibers of social roles and bonds, and relationships between subordinates and superordinates. But if women are to lead us out of the ooze Bokun described, then Kanter's descriptions and analyses convince me that the paths emanating from bureaucratic organizations will be far less rewarding than the reading of her invaluable study.

Now, if we are to make an attempt to reach, well, if not nirvana, then surely


"...black body radiation... and the black-box theory...and now I'm up to Black Holes!"
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not the savannah, Joseph F. Kett's *Rites of Passage* (Basic Books; $16.50) ought to be a guide. Historians, it always seems to me, tell the best tales. And this one, the history of adolescence in America from 1790 to the present, takes its place alongside Aries's classic work, and the more recent productions of Lloyd de Mause and Edward Shorter.

The evolution of the American adolescent is considered by Kett in terms of the familiar transformations in technology, education, industrialization, migration and work and leisure patterns. Again, as was partly true in Bokun's thesis, capitalism and its vicissitudes looms as an inexorably complex hero—or is it anti-hero? Given Bokun's ideas about the self-defeating quality of individual achievement and uncontrolled ambition, it is fascinating to trace with Kett the changes in educational and industrial policies, and their differential effect on boys and girls. America always has found deliciously attractive the ethic of people, typically males, making a mark. Bokun might despair at the thought of it all, but he would be fascinated with Kett's marvelously well documented accounts of how this ethic is affected by evolving work patterns and the growing leisure time accorded America's young people.

Kett writes splendidly of youth's conventionality and unconventionality, their jealousies and imitations, their self conceived needs and society's self protective constraints upon them. His comparisons of gangs and affluent youth groups is particularly intriguing. Like Bokun, Kett, not so incidentally, is concerned with juvenile offenders. Bokun speaks of them in terms of their anticipated adolescent strivings which communities seek to correct. Kett documents changes in juvenile reform, and significantly, places this issue in the context of America's constantly shifting morality, and, for that matter, moralism.

On this last point, Stephen Schlossman's *Love and the American Delinquent* (University of Chicago Press; $15) deserves mention. Schlossman, another excellent historical story teller, has examined transformations in the ethics, ideals and programs of juvenile justice, and has come out with a book that ought to serve as an introduction to the growing literature of children's rights. This literature, inevitably braced with the phrase "in the best interest of the child" is an uneven one. Good intentions are not always enough when it comes to dealing with people, especially innocent ones. Love is not enough, as Bettelheim said. Nor is polemical or self congratulatory writing. Schlossman's corrective, as it were, is history. Like Kett, he is a master of his field and must be read.

The passage of the adolescent to adulthood is the underlying theme of George E. Vaillant's *Adaptation to Life* (Little, Brown; $19.95). Ironically, that word adaptation is the one Bokun reserved for women, but Vaillant's preoccupation is men. More specifically, Vaillant, a practicing psychoanalyst and researcher, examined closely the lives of those men examined first in the famous Grant Study. While the Grant Study focused on the ways men deal with the physical stresses of life, Vaillant extended the investigation to psychological adaptations. Strongly psychological, therefore, *Adaptation to Life* now ranks among our most important documents of the life cycle.

One remarkable section of Vaillant's book is devoted to the construction of a hierarchy or continuum of adaptive defense mechanisms. From this developmental hierarchy, we are able to trace the lives he has studied, men whose words are found throughout the book, along pathways to illness and health. Indeed, one might call the book the psycho-social evolution of illness and health, and in this regard measure its contribution by the glorious standards set down by two other psychoanalysts: Erik Erikson and Anna Freud. For those who feel psychiatry is on the wane, this book should be addressed. It brings the life study up to that grand and human level Robert White achieved in *Lives in Progress*.

What I take from all these books, among other things, is the feeling of a force that is the struggle of human beings not only to survive, but to shape and reproduce life, and to know, however briefly, the taste of genuine happiness. Our collective struggle seems treacherously self destructive. In Philip Slater's words, we have pursued and probably trapped loneliness. In James J. Lynch's *The Broken Heart* (Basic Books; $10.95), the medical, cultural and human consequences of this loneliness are beautifully treated.

We are a lonely people, Lynch writes, and we pay an enormous price because of it. Vaillant's work confirms this. Not unlike Bokun's image of man as infant, we feel it weak and effeminate to need people. We turn dependency away from its spiritual and deeply human meanings and into a symptom of psychopathology. In Lynch's words, we "fractionate love into a variety of sensory modalities." We make science at all costs, and either derogate feelings, or bloat them to absurd proportions through our romanticizing of them and our renowned self infatuation. Lynch tells us about our culture, religions, our evolution really, when he lays out his medical and psychiatric evidence. And he can write. Indeed, in a monied age sprinkled with how-to-lead-your-life books, most of which come out of the infantile juices Bokun warns us about, *The Broken Heart* is a lovely antidote. Even if it's just a placebo, a temporary respite, it more than suffices. Lynch is just what the doctor ordered.

May I hope that Santa may be thoughtful this year in selecting books for us. May Santa's suggested reading in some way enlighten us, touch our sensibilities, and turn us away from the overpowering self indulgence and self interest that seems to consume us. What a Christmas, then, Santa and the social sciences would have provided.

Thomas J. Cottle is Visiting Distinguished Professor of Psychology at Amherst College, and Lecturer on Psychology at the Harvard Medical School. His most recent book is *Private Lives and Public Accounts* (Univ. of Mass. Press).

Carl Sagan on science

Among the many thousands of non-specialist books published in 1977 in America, far fewer than one percent were devoted to science. The best of these are only rarely available in neighborhood book shops where, however, there is often a large shelf devoted to "mysticism" and the "occult"—that is, to what some people wish were true, rather than what has been found out to be probably true. Yet, many of the science books offer skillful and entertaining writing, accessible to the general reader, on recent scientific

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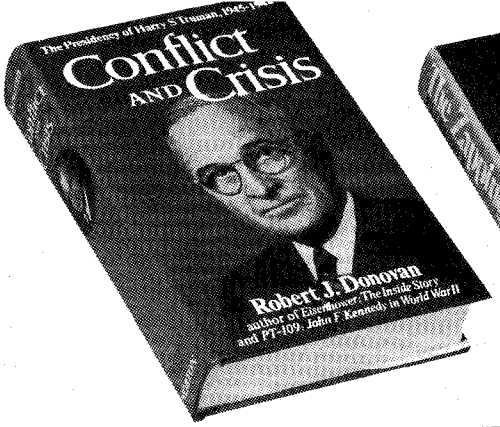
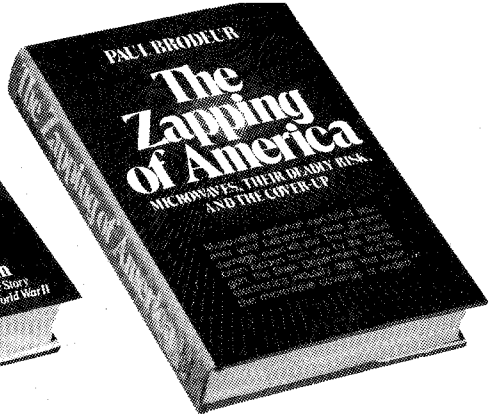
findings of great fascination and importance. Here is a brief listing of some of the more interesting science books of the year:

The Physical Sciences—Isaac Asimov is approaching the writing of his 200th book, more than most Americans read in a lifetime. The style of his books on science is simple and direct; unlike many authors he is fully mindful of what the reader does not yet know. In *The Collapsing Universe* (Walker Books; $8.95) he describes the astonishing recent discoveries and speculations on black holes in space, and along the way discusses a good deal of fundamental physics and modern astronomy. The book's arguments are illuminated by the use of very simple arithmetic, and speculations are clearly so labelled. Some of the speculations will leave the reader fairly breathless, as, for example, the idea that matter which disappears down black holes gushed out again 15 billion years ago to assist in the creation of the universe. A detailed chronological account of the best modern thinking on the origin of the universe is given in Steven Weinberg's *The First Three Minutes of the Universe* (Basic; $8.95). A very strange early universe is depicted at a time long before there were such things as atoms or molecules. The author, a distinguished theoretical physicist with a knack for the popularization of science, has included some elementary mathematical appendices, which will greatly reward the venturesome who have not forgotten high school algebra. A mathematics-free but extremely rich and ably presented discussion of the universe as a whole is Timothy Ferris's *The Red Limit* (Morrow; $10). His presentation of cosmological ideas and observations is aided by interviews with some of those who made major recent discoveries—such as the detection of echoes of the primeval fireball, the origin of the universe, by sensitive radio receivers. A fine sense of scientific controversy and the humanness of the contending scientists is conveyed. The author has a background in newspaper reporting and is an editor of *Rolling Stone*; Ferris has pioneered a new style of science book, which combines skillful interviews with more standard exposition.

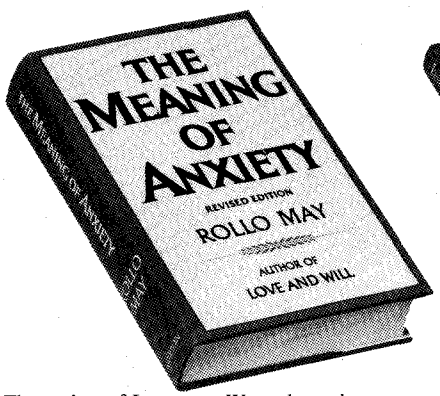
Fred Hoyle is one of the leading astrophysicists of the 20th century as well as a novelist, playwright, and a man who is interested in everything. In *Ten Faces of the Universe* (Freeman; $10.95) he tackles just about everything, and in 217 pages. The book combines fascinating



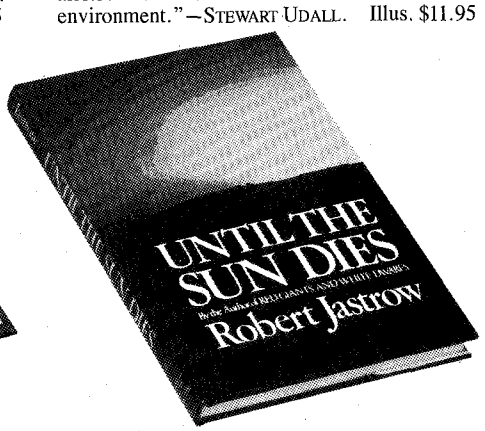
"An extraordinary story that Donovan has told splendidly."—JOSEPH P. LASH, *N.Y. Times Book Review* Illus. $12.95



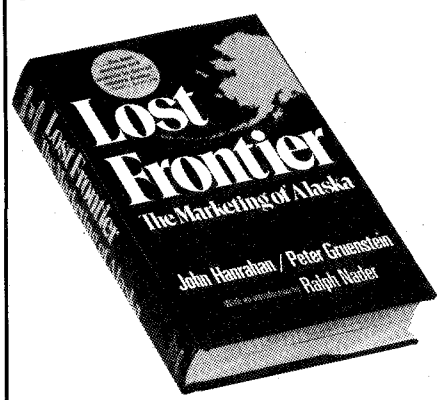
"Brodeur is a latter-day Rachel Carson who has alerted the nation to an insidious threat to the environment."—STEWART UDALL. Illus. $11.95



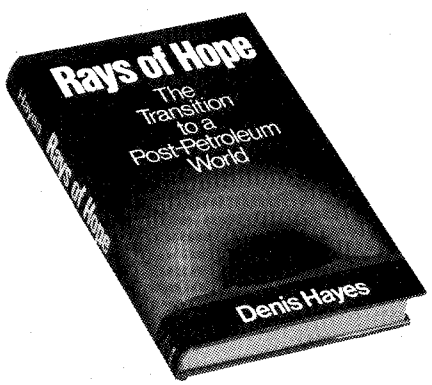
The author of LOVE AND WILL shows how confronting anxiety can lead to the development of positive aspects of selfhood. $12.95



"A most attractive mixture of fact and speculation about our past and future, written in fluent prose."—JACQUES BARZUN. Illus. $8.95



"A plainspoken account of the people and politics of Alaska... the best overview and analysis to date."—*Alaska Advocate*. Illus. $10.95



"An excellent account of how we can move safely and rationally beyond the petroleum era."
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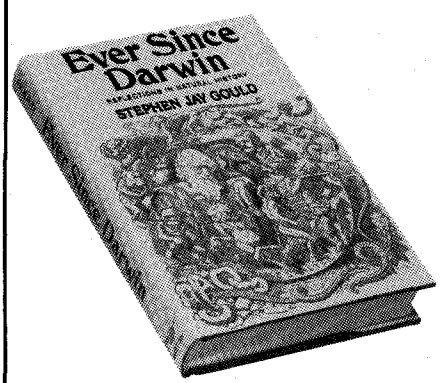

"Combines literacy, comprehensibility and depth of insight; it deserves a wide audience."
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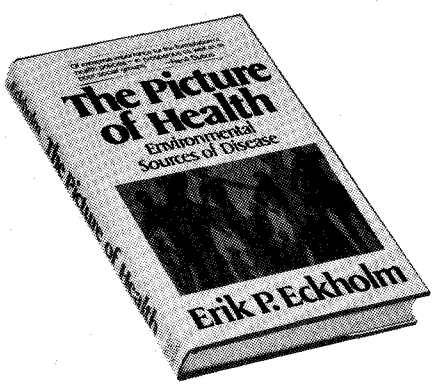

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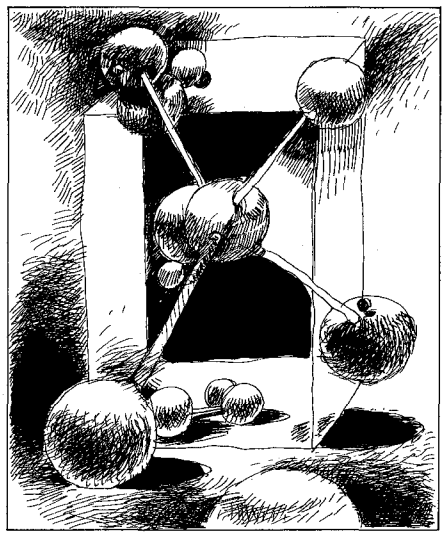
autobiography; very clear and consistent use of the spacetime diagram; suggestions on the causes leading to the death of Evariste Galois, a brilliant French mathematician who was killed at age 20 in a duel after having stayed up all the previous night to write down the foundations of the theory of groups; an exhilarating and idiosyncratic tour of cosmology; a short description of the inside of the Earth and the motions of continents upon it; and provocative ideas on the energy crisis and overpopulation which will offend almost everyone. Here is a brief and accessible introduction to the recent ruminations of a major thinker.

The Earth's Aura (Putnam; $12.95) is Louise B. Young's happy metaphor for the fragile and life-sustaining atmosphere of our small planet. The book deftly and accurately describes many recent findings and concerns including the composition and motion of the Earth's atmosphere; the weather; the rarely seen green flash at sunset; the influence of halocarbons on the Earth's ozone layer; and the possibility of inadvertent climate modification by the industrial and agricultural activities of Man. Some of the most recent findings on the atmospheres of other planets are included, as is a portfolio of color photographs of the Earth from space. The book is graced with many compelling historical vignettes including the perilous 1862 flight of Coxwell and Glaisher to an altitude of more than 30,000 feet in an open balloon; the discovery of the jet stream in Second World War Japan and its use to carry unmanned incendiary balloons to the West Coast of the United States; Larry Edgar's account of one of the most palpitating sailplane flights ever made; and the lyrical description by Prince Pückler-Muskau of one of the first observations of the panorama of clouds seen from above during an 1817 balloon ascent. This is crisp, competent, and stylish science writing.

Biological Sciences—The cornerstone of modern biology and one of the major intellectual achievements of the last two centuries is the theory of evolution by natural selection of Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace. Largely because of a mistaken and unimaginative impression that human beings are demeaned by being related to the other creatures on the planet Earth the Darwinian perspective is rarely encountered in television nature programs, high school biology textbooks, or the pulpit, and many zoos and natural history museums seem reluctant to use their exhibits to illustrate Darwinian ideas. Gould's *Ever Since Darwin* (Norton; $9.95) is a refreshing break with this tradition of public insularity. Subtitled "Reflections in Natural History" it is a collection of charming essays which combine literacy, comprehensibility, and depth of insight. Along the way Gould teaches on the extinction of the dinosaurs; how the ratio of area to volume permits us to understand the shapes of churches, the sizes of mountains and something of the evolution of the brains of vertebrates; the reasons for the enormous antlers of



Drawing by Salvador Bru

the Irish elk; and the social misuse of biological ideas, as in some careless or unscrupulous justifications of racism by social Darwinists—arguments which Gould neatly dissects.

Lorraine Cudmore must be tired of book reviews like the one in the Boston *Herald American* which was headlined "Looks like *Vogue* model and is highly literate; her book on cells warm, fun." But the headline writer was on the mark and *The Center of Life: A Natural History of the Cell* (Quadrangle; $8.95) is a delight. In these bite-sized essays she takes a close look at the microbial circus within us and at the astonishing properties of single-celled life. She writes with grace and humor and I hope we will see many more equally excellent books from her pen. The best modern thinking on the evolution of the human species is clearly set out in *Origins* (Dutton; $17.95) co-authored by Richard Leakey, one of the pioneering paleoanthropologists, scientists whose lives are devoted to uncovering and understanding the fossil remains of our ancestors and collateral relatives. The authors are socially concerned, appropriate skepticism of arguments about man being a "killer ape" is evinced, the findings presented are very up-to-date, and the book is richly illustrated.

Borderline Science—Most new ideas are mistaken. That is, on close scrutiny they do not conform to the real world. For this reason, practice in skepticism, some armament against credulity, is useful. Yet the list of uncritical books on areas bordering on science is long and depressing—in part because so few books which communicate the joys and wonders of science seem to be available. Philip Slater's *The Wayward Gate: Science and the Supernatural* (Beacon Press; $8.95) is a slight book which opts for the supernatural. Favorable and rigidly uncritical treatment is afforded ghosts, yetis (whose respectability is growing, we are assured), flying saucers, Velikovskian catastrophism and the like. The book is replete with homilies such as "a coincidence is a trend we've decided not to take seriously;" "'objectivity' is the search for a uniform totalitarian standard, for the 'objective' person is motivated primarily by a desire to be God;" or "psychosis is not having a coherent reality style." The book is an inadequate attempt to update the arguments of Charles Fort. There are valid critiques to be made of the scientific method but they are not to be found here. (A good general antidote is Charles McKay's 19th century masterpiece *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds.*) *The UFO Enigma: The Definitive Explanation of the UFO Phenomenon* (Doubleday; $8.95) is a book as skeptical about the extraterrestrial hypothesis of UFOs as Slater's is credulous. The immodesty of the subtitle is reflected in the text where, by and large, only a single explanation for each UFO report is considered to have any claim to validity. And in all cases the explanation is some natural phenomenon misapprehended by the observer, or a hoax. If the reader can suppress his natural annoyance at authors Menzel's and Taves's imperious style, it provides a welcome note of caution in the present era which follows *Close Encounters of the Third Kind.* A serious challenge to the ideas in Immanuel Velikovsky's *Worlds in Collision* can be found in *Scientists Confront Velikovsky* (Cornell Univ. Press; $8.95) edited by Donald Goldsmith. The many books supporting Velikovsky's notion of a cometary encounter with the Earth explaining events in the book of Exodus will now be joined by at least one book setting out the reasons that most

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scientists consider Velikovsky's views, romantic as they are, to be unfounded.

Engineering Sciences—Thomas Edison's name and a few of his accomplishments are widely known; but the details of his life are not. In *Edison* (Putnam; $12.95), Ronald Clark provides an intriguing view of this complex genius from his style of invention and the skepticism which initially greeted his claims to his speculations on atomic energy and his doubts about the existence of a personal God. There are also many fine period photographs. Human beings are by nature a tool-using species and the inventive tradition which includes Edison goes back several million years to the dawn of our species, as Leakey and Lewin emphasize. Samuel Florman's *The Existential Pleasures of Engineering* (St. Martin's; $7.95) is a powerful affirmation of the humanity of the engineering enterprise. Florman's critique of the anti-technologists includes an argument on the pleasures of craftsmanship which begins with Homer and the Bible. Florman holds that technology means peace of mind not only through material well-being but also through the delight in purposive construction and the comprehension of the way things work which it conveys.

Of all our senses, sight is by far the most important and much more attention is given to vision in the human cerebral cortex than to any other form of sensory input including hearing. As a result many of us have become inattentive and unaware of the rich "soundscape" of our surroundings. *The Tuning of the World* by Murray Schafer (Knopf; $12.95) is a lush exploration of this realm of experience, its physics and psychology which describes the engineering of special "sound houses" and includes nostalgic reminiscence of obsolete sounds such as the jostling of the milkman's bottles which are unrecorded and will soon be unremembered. Schafer's book is a consciousness-expanding experience. Finally, I list another of Asimov's sprightly, accessible and fascinating works, *Asimov on Numbers* (Doubleday; $9.95). This one on some basic ideas in mathematics starts with an illuminating treatment of the most elementary ideas in arithmetic. There are excursions ranging from the sizes of animals to the arithmetic of infinity, and a little Asimovian outrage at people who blame computers for misbillings rather than the computer programmers. One might as well, Asimov says, blame arithmetic.

It is a pleasure to see so rich a harvest of science-related books in 1977.

Carl Sagan is Professor of Astronomy and Space Sciences at Cornell University.

John Gardner on fiction

The best novel this year, according to my tastes anyway, is John Fowles's *Daniel Martin* (Little, Brown; $12.95). Fowles is always good, probably better than anyone else now writing in English, but in his new book he's better than ever. The novel is, as every true novel should be, a treasure hoard: an abundance of interesting characters and suspenseful, meaningful events, a banquet of beautifully done landscapes and interiors, all working together to think out and test serious ideas. It's true of course that not all novels have to be philosophical. No one grumps when another thriller comes from John Le Carré, and indeed another one did this year, a wonderful book *The Honourable Schoolboy*, (Knopf; $10.95), but when I come right down to it I have to admit that all of my favorite books, from *Pride and Prejudice* to *Moby Dick*, are works in which part of the pleasure is in the artist's working out of important ideas. That has always been one of the things Fowles does best. To readers who want only "entertainment," and a number of reviewers seem to fall into that class, *Daniel Martin* may seem slow. But to those who care about the ways in which a novel can think out by means of concrete situations the most difficult philosophical ideas, and out of this process can get judgments we trust as we would be wrong to trust mere logic and abstraction, Fowles's novel is pure joy. He knows, of course, about novelistic entertainment which is why we have to read his novels, especially this last one, two or three times. The first time through one is so worried about Martin's love life, so concerned about how all the characters will turn out, even the most minor, we cannot stop to savor all the rest. With each rereading the book and each character becomes richer. It's the kind of book that one chooses to teach if one's lucky enough to have a college or high school English class to teach again and again. Such books are rare; one appears every 25 years or so.

The other books I will mention as my favorites are not exactly books I like less than I like *Daniel Martin*. They are simply smaller books, books I like very much but in a different way. One of these is Tim O'Brien's *Going After Cacciato* (Delacorte; $8.95). O'Brien's earlier books *If I Die in a Combat Zone Box Me Up and Ship Me Home*, a collection of stories, and *Northern Lights*, a novel, were very good but slightly ordinary books; ordinary in the sense that the style, though smooth and professional, did not stand out as a unique instrument. The characters did not stand out as unlike other characters generally speaking in other books directly or indirectly dealing with Viet Nam. O'Brien has been from the beginning a thoughtful writer, philosophical in an easy, offhand way. He's always good at the things that count for most readers: he can do landscapes, weather, houses and so on. He can build interest and suspense. But in *Going After Cacciato* he moves into the first rank. His style has rather suddenly become like no one else's, perhaps because O'Brien has begun to make allusion to the heart of his method. Notice how many literary echoes are packed into his first half paragraph: Dickens, Hemingway, Joyce and so on, though the effect nevertheless seems straight, unselfconscious narrative:

> *It was a bad time. Billy Boy Watkins was dead and so was Frenchie Tucker. Billy Boy had died of fright, scared to death on the field of battle. Frenchy Tucker had been shot through the nose. Bernie Lynn and Lieutenant Sidney Martin had died in tunnels. Pederson was dead and Rudy Chassler was dead. Buff was dead. Ready Mix was dead. They were all among the dead. The rain fed fungus that grew in the men's boots and socks, and their socks rotted and their feet turned white and soft so that the skin could be scraped off with a fingernail, and Stink Harris woke up screaming one night with a leech on his tongue. When it was not raining a low mist moved across the paddies, blending the elements into a single grey element and the war was cold and pasty and rotten.*

The characters in *Going After Cacciato* are all larger than life, all as vivid and

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simple as mythic figures or huge animated cartoon people and the idea of the novel is directly and seriously philosophical, not offhand: a systematic and exciting exploration of the interpenetration of fact and imagination. Simple-minded Cacciato decides to go AWOL, gets a map, and discovers that he can theoretically follow a straight line from Viet Nam to Paris through Tibet. From that initial leap of imagination—O'Brien's and also, in a way, poor, dumb Cacciato's—the novel pours. It's a splendid book though not the kind of book one would want to teach over and over. It's the kind of book meant to be complete at one reading. Oddly enough, O'Brien's book has numerous parallels with Fowles's *Daniel Martin* and in each case O'Brien comes down on the same side as Fowles, the presently unfashionable side. Both writers concern themselves with Existentialism and find it a dangerous philosophical error; both writers worry about the problem of a happy ending in contemporary fiction and look with distrust at those novelists who feel obliged to treat human existence meanly, prophesying the worst, selecting the ugliest and the least hopeful, offering no vision of what might be but only one more sharp picture of the abyss.

I've read several other first-rate books this year. One is Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* (Knopf; $8.95), a wonderfully vivid, singing book, deeply touching in a way we have learned to expect this writer to be. Morrison's characters may or may not be accurate reflections of real black people in America. I wouldn't know, in most cases. But whether her books are realistic or something else, they are full of people one is delighted to know and full of wonderful language. She makes us believe that a man might really be named Macon Dead, that a child might come to be called "milkman" or that all this might be literal fact:

> *Her house sat eighty feet from the sidewalk backed by four huge pine trees from which she got the needles she stuffed into her mattress. Seeing the pine trees started him thinking about her mouth; how she loved, as a girl, to chew pine needles, and as a result smelled even then like a forest. For a dozen years she had been like his own child. After their mother died she had come struggling out of the womb without help from throbbing muscles or the pressure of swift womb water. As a result, for all the years he knew her her stomach was as smooth and sturdy as her back, at no place interrupted by a navel.*

One of the things most striking about *Song of Solomon* is the beauty of the book's construction, the way event swells into event, confrontation shoots toward confrontation, and meaning rises like a thing of nature, effortlessly flowering.

And I would also mention Nicholas Delbanco's new book *Possession* (Morrow; $8.95). In all his work Delbanco has been a rhetorician, sometimes very effectively, and sometimes not, in that some early books the rhetoric distracts us from the characters and events. Here for the first time the rhetoric is in beautiful control. Delbanco holds himself in for most of the action, paying close attention to how people really speak, how things really look and feel. But he shows what wonderful things he can do with language when he wants to. He gives us here and there throughout the book fragments from the letters and builder's instructions of the long dead owner of the Big House, the huge old mansion in which the novel's main characters now live. Passages like this:

> *"Let the buildings be laid out," Peacock had commanded "in the Shape and Memory of Our Savior's ransom, with the four points of the compass being the four of the Cross. Let the barns be due west of the house, pointing as His strong arm pointed to where I scribe these lines. Let the Carriages and suchlike be stored on the easterly Axis. South at a suitable distance, where his feet were nailed, you may build in whatsoever fashion but not above one story's heighth, the farmer's house. Thus even to the eagle's eye, and surely to him who stands on the Cupola, will we furnish instruction. Somehow I seem to see the Holy Spirit hovering, in the bird-guise he assumes wherewith in safety he may visit this nether pit, and to avoid a suchlike crucifixion—for what are the yearly migrations but testimonial also to the Flock's disgust, and do not greylag geese even example this search, scanning the Compass-points for some clear sign that our Redeemer prospereth—espying the Reverent arrangement of our Severall buildings, and knowing and reporting to the august Captain that in this township at the least there thrives one Honest man!"*

And I would mention, if I had time and space, another fine book, Mark Helprin's first novel *Refiner's Fire* (Knopf; $10). But enough. One could go on a long time. It's been a good year for fiction, the best I think in some time.

John Gardner's most recent book is *In the Suicide Mountains* (Knopf).

William H. Pritchard on literary criticism

Richard Poirier's book on Frost I judge the best critical study of a writer to have appeared in some time. (*Robert Frost: The Work of Knowing*, Oxford; $11.95) It is the first book to compare Frost with establishment moderns like Joyce and Eliot, as if comparisons were not odious but natural and necessary in order that the writer be accurately placed and more truly appreciated. "Frost is a poet of genius because he could so often make his subtleties inextricable from an apparent availability," says Poirier in his preface; as an interpreter of these subtleties he hopes his own "restlessness" will save him from "inflation and summary." Poirier was a student and colleague of Reuben Brower's, whose book on Frost published in 1963 was until now the best introduction to that poetry (always excepting Jarrell's essays). But Poirier's supersedes it, partly because of the new book's willingness, sometimes a trifle too eagerly evident, to be restless with anything but the best "work of knowing" Frost's poems give expression to.

His argument is the cleverly dialectical one that the very skepticism with which Joyce, Eliot and other modernists treated the power of literature "had the effect of endowing it, and themselves, with precisely the enormous cultural importance which they were calling into question"; and that condescension toward Frost significantly derives from the assumption that modernist literature "was made inevitable by the historical realities of the twentieth century." What Poirier shows is what some of us knew already but hadn't seen so admirably worked out at length: that Frost is not inferior to or lesser than Joyce or Eliot, but different from them.

The book should be praised for its ability to combine much quoting of individual poems with unobvious, fresh commentary on their particular effects, and with arguments about general principles, larger designs; for its extremely shrewd use of Frost's letters and other prose statements, not to "illustrate" or "prove" something, but as yet another expression of the poet and

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the man; for its willingness to use as material lesser-known poems (like "A Star in a Stone-Boat", "On a Bird Singing in its Sleep", "Unharvested", "Happiness Makes Up in Height for What It Lacks in Length", "Atmosphere", "Rose Pogonias"—how many of those do *you* remember?) which never get talked about; for its delicacy in dealing precisely with rhythmic effects, and for its audacity in talking about how sexuality gets into the verse of "a great poet of marriage, maybe the greatest since Milton." Finally, for its refusal to accept the terms in which Frost presents himself to us; if Poirier finds a poem genteel or embarrassing or self-congratulatory—even if the poem is "West Running Brook" or "Directive"—he says why he finds it so. Like Frost, you never know what Poirier is going to say next, which is the case with original writers.

We knew in advance that Harold Bloom's book on Wallace Stevens (*The Poems of Our Climate*, Cornell; $17.95) would demonstrate Stevens's preeminence (though Bloom now sees Frost as Stevens's great rival) as the poetic genius of this century. Bloom's deep acquaintance, knowledge and love of these poems, over the years, in detail and in the large, surely qualifies him superbly to write the definitive interpretation of an oeuvre. Since I find his theories of poetic "crossings" distracting rather than enabling, with regard to individual poems, I cared more about some parts of his book than others, and cared most when he appeared to drop the theory and occupied himself with no more than helping us read the words right. There are fine, helpful, illuminating discussions of, among other Stevens poems, "The Snow Man", "The Man on the Dump", "Esthétique du Mal", "Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction." As compared to Poirier on Frost, Bloom is much more the Interpreter, less interested in and less able to give us the swing or tone of a line. When he does present multiple possibilities for reading a line he has a tendency to close off our options, as when he writes about "What am I to believe?" (a great moment in "Notes"), "What kind of a question is this, open or rhetorical? And which of these words is to be emphasized: what? am? I? Believe? 'I' is the answer, and the question is rhetorical . . . "

Whether Stevens is finally a greater poet than Yeats I can't now decide; but Bloom's comparable-length book on Yeats of seven years ago is more inviting to a reader uncertain that either poet is among, as Spender would say, the truly great. Meaning simply that Bloom is annoyed by all sorts of things in Yeats, wants to devaluate certain overrated poems, is pressed to disagreement in a way he seldom is in the Stevens book (except with exegetes—is Vendler more accurate than Kermode or Doggett about poem x), so that at times the air becomes, in the words of Bloom's hateful T.S. Eliot, "thoroughly small and dry." Not being willing to imagine the worst that can be said against your poet means that someone like me, unconvinced that Stevens has produced our supremest fictions, needs to have more radical attention directed at the language than Bloom is usually able to make time for. One example must do, a passage about the planter in "Notes" which Bloom introduces strongly: "Stevens is afraid of being too moved here, but he *is* very moved, and his rhetoric persuades us to be immensely moved." He then quotes the two stanzas beginning with

> *He thought often of the land from which he came,*
> *How that whole country was a melon, pink*
> *If seen rightly and yet a possible red.*

As one who is not immensely moved here, not clear why Stevens "*is*" so moved, skeptical of the "melon" trope as possibly moving about anything (I also have trouble with the Canon Aspirin just because Stevens named him that) I need something other than the explanatory sentence which follows: "Far from being a symbol of change, the planter shows that 'there is a substance in us that prevails.'" Here and elsewhere the poet's own terms are too deferentially allowed to run the critical show. But this book is a major performance that anybody reading or writing about Stevens must come to terms with in ways I have barely begun to.

David Kalstone's *Five Temperaments* (Oxford; $10.95), on Bishop, Lowell, Merrill, Rich and Ashbery, is an intelligent, sympathetic, scrupulously fair-minded appreciation of the five contemporary American poets he judges most central and most pleasure-giving. It is a hard book to take issue with, since it is so modestly uncontroversial in its judgments and since it mainly means to direct us to a sense of valuable moments and striking effects of voice in the developing careers of these poets. Any book on one's contemporaries should be subjective indeed; as a reader who admires Kalstone's first three poets but has the deepest reservations about Rich and Ashbery, I marvel at (or resent!) his catholicity of taste. At the risk of seeming disingenuous, I think Kalstone should have tried more fully to imagine a reader like me who is less than charmed by Ashbery, not deeply moved by Adrienne Rich; and then to have made his own defense of them large enough to put me in my place. Particularly with Ashbery, Kalstone is excellent in demonstrating the strangeness of the style; but why that should therefore be a valuable strangeness to experience I don't yet see. The best section of the book is on James Merrill, particularly Kalstone's discussion of his earlier poems and the perfecting of his style; here the critic seems most at ease with his subject and his reader, and Merrill's "temperament" emerges clearly and interestingly.

Although it was published at the end of last year, Robert Pinsky's book on contemporary poetry should be mentioned here. *The Situation of Poetry*, (Princeton) is a "traveler's essay" as he terms it, written by an excellent young poet about certain styles and strategies to be observed in the landscape around him. He hits the nail on the head of Ashbery: "the problem of [his] artfully 'destroyed' language is the reader's potential boredom with the virtual absence of detonation"—instead we get "daffy charm". Pinsky's essay moves here and there, as the spirit moves him, but almost always he has something useful to say about the poetic styles of Ammons, O'Hara or Cunningham, Charles Wright or Frank Bidart. And he keeps his reader cleverly in mind, beginning one paragraph in the midst of a discussion of "Contemporary" with "But I sense the reader dozing". More sentences like that in more books would not at all be a bad thing. In fact I dozed not at all; *The Situation of Poetry* is a book to reread.

Samuel Hyne's *The Auden Generation* (Viking; $12.50) raises important questions about how well the literary and social historian can consort with the literary critic who must attempt to "make personal approach to . . . the work of literature" (F.R. Leavis). There is no more accomplished literary historian, writer and "researcher" than Samuel Hynes, and his year-by-year tour through the 1930's in England is full of good things, like his remarks about *A Gun for Sale*, or Empson's book on Pastoral, or Grigson's *New Verse* magazine, or Christopher Caudwell. I hope not to be thought picky if I mention two serious limitations: the first is

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Hyne's far too reverent treatment of Stephen Spender (do people really still read his poems?) especially the bathetic "I think continually . . ." about which Hynes says "The vision is a noble and affirmative one, and the poem is very moving, and very youthful." I found this strange talk for a literary critic, especially as those noble, affirmative cadences rang in my ears. That Spender's poems generally are taken to be "deeply expressive of a general mood of the time" doesn't make them any better as poems. My second criticism is the total absence, in the book, of Wyndham Lewis; I hope my own interest in that writer will make no less forceful the statement that his omission from a book subtitled "Literature and Politics in England in the 1930's" is, as they say, a scandal.

Lewis is also absent from Martin Green's book of "cultural comparisons of England with America" (*Transatlantic Patterns*, Basic Books; $11.95) which doesn't live up to its title and is really a ragbag stuffed with various essays Green has published over the last 10 or so years. But the essays on Evelyn Waugh are so good that in getting them between hard covers the book justifies itself. Somebody who publishes as much as Green is likely to repeat himself, and there is much overlapping here with the English material in *Children of the Sun*. Still, as should be evident by now, Green is a highly distinctive and an always challenging critic; at age 50 he has given us nine books of varied criticism, biography, cultural comparison and speculation—and we should be grateful.

An even briefer mention of two good books on modern fiction: Robert Martin Adam's *Afterjoyce* (Oxford; $10) is an elegantly and economically conducted trip through some post-Joyce writers to see where and to what extent Joyce's work lives in theirs. Faulkner, Woolf, Beckett, Nabokov, Broch, Gadda, Durrell and Pynchon are the major exhibits about which the resourceful Adams invariably finds something interesting to say. But over the years we've learned to take Adam's wit and learning and taste too much for granted, as in nine books about writers from many languages he has unfailingly left us more enlightened than when we began. And in *Four Postwar American Novelists* (Univ. of Chicago Press; $15) Frank D. McConnell writes long closely argued appreciations of Bellow, Mailer, Barth and Pynchon. Especially with Barth, one feels that over-estimation of his subject is McConnell's danger; but taken together the essays are mutually illuminating as well as being individually first rate.

Finally, the award to literary criticism's most overlooked book of the years goes to Marvin Mudrick's *The Man in the Machine* (Horizon; $9.95) a collection of his essays over the past seven years on writers like Lawrence, Chekhov, Trollope, Jane Austen. Mudrick is another National Resource, master of mockery and the one-line wisecrack, but also able in these essays to rise to marvelous salutes to the books and authors he cares most about. Mudrick's collection is a book to read for people who like mainly to read books, rather than interpret them or fuss about the difficulties of interpreting them. So in making a list of interesting books of literary criticism, 1977, Mudrick's is an occasion to cease and turn instead to those mere novels and poems about which we surely write but occasionally read as well.

William H. Pritchard's Seeing Through Everything, of which he is still fond, was published by Oxford this fall.

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Jeane Kirkpatrick on politics

One of the recurring debates among Western intellectuals concerns the consequences of efforts to realize—through politics—a Utopian vision of man and society. The debate, already in progress by the time that Aristotle criticized Plato's proposed ideal state—intensifies whenever some men resort to violence in the effort to realize the dreams of a perfect society and other men, observing the violence, conclude that the expectation of perfection and the effort to achieve it through revolution lead not to melioration but to tyranny and terror.

The English Civil War, and the French and Russian Revolutions, are landmarks in the unfolding of this chapter of intellectual history; associated with each are doctrines that demand and predict unprecedented progress, and other doctrines that trace a straight line from utopia to the guillotine. Lilburne, Winstanley, St. Just, Marx, Locke, Burke, Tocqueville, Popper are distinguished names in this ongoing dialogue.

The continuing appeals of communism—a creed that espouses revolution and progress through politics—and the hunger and tyranny and "re-education" that have so far followed the triumph of men acting in its name, give the debate about revolution, reform and human well-being special significance for our times. The resurgence in the '60s of revolutionary philosophies and violent politics, of liberation movements and terrorism underscores the broad contemporary relevance of inquiries into the social, psychological and political characteristics and consequences of revolutionary political philosophy. Does the road to communism necessarily lead through *Gulag?* Must a liberating revolution result in dictatorship? How many eggs must be broken to make a millenarian omelet? And how can we be sure about the quality of that omelet once it is cooked?

Several recent books explore these and related questions. And, as usual, reach different conclusions. Santiago Carrillo, leader of Spain's communist party, argues in an ideological best seller, *Eurocommunismo y Estado*, that it is possible to build communism with a human face, and offers to show how—whenever his nation's voters decide to let him. Close scrutiny of Carrillo's book leaves this reader convinced of his commitment to national independence and unconvinced of his attachment to bourgeois liberties and "reversible" political processes. French intellectual Jean Francois Revel, takes a contrary position in his new book, *The Totalitarian Temptation* (Doubleday; $8.95). To Revel, communism remains the principal obstacle to individual freedom, economic development *and* the achievement of socialism. Both Carrillo and Revel have attracted wide audiences in Europe and both books are recommended. The most interesting of the new books that explore the prospects for progress though, is, I think, Melvin Lasky's *Utopia and Revolution* (Univ. of Chicago Press; $35), which describes and discusses the varieties and conse-

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quences of utopianism in Western political thought and action from the Middle Ages to the present.

In pursuit of his subject, Lasky ranges widely and freely through philosophy, history, literature and politics pulling together diverse strands of Western experience that add color and texture to the broad tapestry he labors to weave—Sir Thomas More, Dante, Immanuel Kant, John Lilburne, Gerrard Winstanley, Karl Marx, Thomas Paine, Mme. de Stäel, Percy Bysshe Shelley, William Wordsworth and dozens of others figure in his tableau. Though many types of utopia are considered, it is the nexus of utopia and revolution which interests the author most. He begins at approximately the point where the search for redemption through revolution supplanted the quest for an other-worldly paradise. In the argument about whether political utopianism is necessarily associated with violence (Dostoevsky, Karl Popper and J.M. Talmon, among others, argue that it is) Melvin Lasky stakes out a middle position. The utopian impulse, he argues, is not necessarily dogmatic and intolerant in style, not necessarily violent in means. Disciplined by reality and tempered by an appreciation that means shape ends, the utopian vision can be harnessed to serve the purposes of reform.

Lasky can take this position because he sees utopianism as a quest for political and social progress, and *not* necessarily as the pursuit of perfection or the end of history. Given his usage, it is possible to be one at the same time "a revolutionary and a reformer, a utopian and a gradualist, a militant and yet a moderate, an endlessly critical philosopher who (knows) the temptations of ideology. . . ." Kant, he thought, was such a man— one who dreamed of an association of power, imagination and virtue, and yet learned to distrust his dreams of an ideal future and to operate instead in a concrete present.

Lasky's book is probably too long, and certainly too expensive, but his learned and insightful discussion of the relations among language, temperament, ideals and action makes it indispensable for persons with a serious interest in the quest for secular salvation.

Some of the recent writings on terrorism confirm and illustrate Lasky's point concerning the role of temperament in the choice of political means. Jillian Becker's book on the Baader-Meinhof gang is a case study in the psycho-social bases of terrorism. *Hitler's Children* (Lippincott; $10) is not a major book but an interesting one which provides an insight into a major international scourge. The most useful parts of this book are the biological accounts of leading members of "Rote Armee Fraktion" (Red Army Faction). These are, of course, the terrorists who killed themselves in a final act of violence against the hated bourgeois state that had just succeeded in freeing the Lufthansa hostages. The stories of Andreas Baader, a spoiled son who failed at everything but sex and violence; of his lover, Gudrun Ensslin, university student, daughter of a leftist Protestant minister; of Ulrike Meinhof, successful journalist at a fashionable left magazine and their colleagues illuminate the interaction of character, ideology and environment in the decade just past that transformed selected middle class youth into violent rebellion against their affluent, liberal societies. The portraits remind any reader who may have forgotten that revolutionary terrorists are above all concerned with destruction—robbing, kidnapping, bombing, murdering. Crime is their metier, politics their rhetoric. Hostility and aggression are dominant components in their characters; ideology justifies their violent loathing of almost everyone, except, of course, the small band of their co-revolutionaries. We know a bit from the study of similar groups—Weathermen, Symbionese Liberation Army—about the symbiosis that binds together these little bands of nihilists.

Becker, I think, errs in her attempt to "explain" the Baader-Meinhof groups by reference to specific aspects of German experience (such as the de-Nazification program that condemned a whole "parental" generation.) Preliminary evidence indicates the psycho-social characteristics of Japanese, Arab, Latin and German terrorists are so similar that they could not be accounted for specifically by national characteristics. One of the international collaborators of the Baader-Meinhof group was the Venezuelan, Vladimar Ilich Ramirez, better known as "Carlos," who has himself become the object of another book that explores terrorism by way of the study of terrorists.

In his new book, *Carlos: Portrait of a Terrorist* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston; $8.95) Colin Smith, a reporter for the London *Observer*, constructs from bits and pieces of information a biography of

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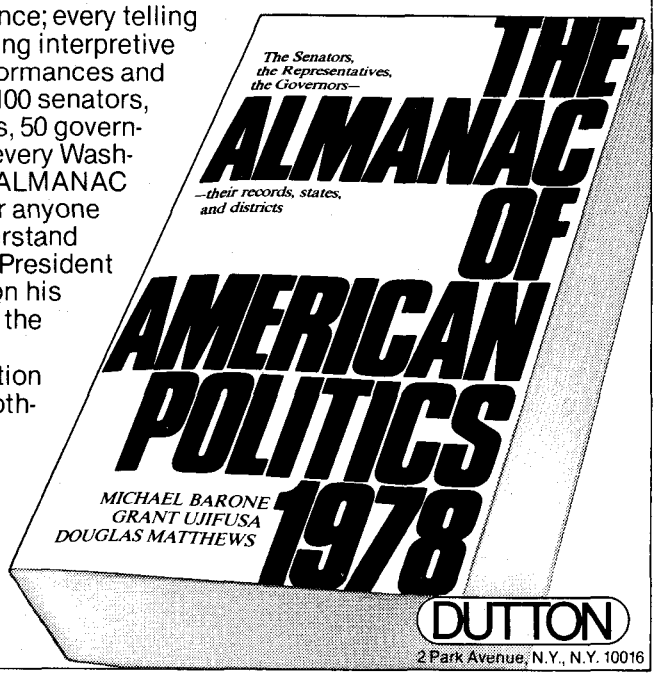

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the world's most infamous terrorist. This information, gathered from interviews and the public record, is incomplete and so, necessarily, there are unanswered questions. Is Carlos, who was expelled from Moscow's Patrice Lumumba University, an agent of the KGB? By whom was he recruited? For whom does he work? Nonetheless, a reader may feel by the time he has finished this book that he knows all he cares to about this pampered son of a wealthy Marxist lawyer whose distinctive daring and brutality permit his work to be recognized by the connoisseurs of terrorism everywhere. Carlos manages to evade the police of the world but maintains contact with all major branches of the terrorists international—in Palestine, Japan, Latin America and Europe. His sustained success in surviving suggests that Carlos is less self-destructive and more in control of his colleagues in political crime. This may or may not itself constitute a clue to the mystery of his identity and motives. Those interested in such puzzles will find Smith's book on the murderous idealist good reading for the Christmas season.

For readers who prefer less apocalyptic and bloody politics, new books are now available on the 1976 American presidential contest. Our politics, even at its highest levels, offer few opportunities for heroic sacrifice and transcendental devotion to abstract ideals and for just this reason, are relatively safe for human consumption. But even by the standards of American politics, the 1976 presidential contest was fundamentally dull. Two apparently virtuous, likable Americans of provincial cast confronted one another in a decorous campaign. No great issues disturbed the public mind, no monstrous behavior disrupted the public peace. And so, this first election held in the "shadow of Vietnam" and the "shadow of Watergate" lacked the melodrama of 1964 and 1972 when we were confronted with "a choice, not an echo," and of 1968, when the noise of anti-war protesters very nearly drowned out both candidates. 1976 constituted a return to "politics as usual" in the limited sense that it pitted against each other two candidates, each of whom presented himself as a moderate, both of whom slanted their campaigns toward that famous "center" where, according to traditional lore, majorities are forged and elections won.

The nominating contests in both parties were less routine. The nearly successful campaign of Ronald Reagan demonstrated that an incumbent could not count on winning his party's nomination—even if he enjoyed the support of nearly all his party's major leaders and high office holders. Jimmy Carter's feat was, if anything, more surprising since Carter was a true outsider to national politics.

Several journalists have written books describing these events. The most comprehensive are Elizabeth Drew's *American Journal* (Random; $12.95) and Jules Witcover's *Marathon* (Viking; $10). Both books tell most readers all they will care to know about the selection of the president in 1976. As its title suggests, Drew's book is in fact a diary kept at the request of *The New Yorker* magazine from January 1, 1976 until the day after the election. It provides a relaxed, thoughtful contemporaneous account of the author's experiences and reflections as she travelled and talked with candidates, staffs, local politicians and voters. Of the two books I most enjoyed Drew's account, but Witcover's more highly structured retrospective viewpoint on the campaign may appeal more to readers in a hurry.

Finally, for the addicts who like to read about politics all the time—there are several new fast-paced novels about presidents, speech writers, diplomats and international intrigue. Of these I preferred *Against All Enemies* (Doubleday; $10) by former White House aides, Ervin J. Duggan and Ben J. Wattenberg. This swiftly moving story of domestic politics and wars of liberation is dramatic enough to hold most readers' attention to the end, and realistic enough to prompt some later reflection on presidential power and American responsibility after Vietnam.

Jeane Kirkpatrick is Resident Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

TRB, *from page 3*

administration has replaced Chapman and talked about stopping the Mexican flood, but done little.

One of the most extraordinary examples of curbing population is China. Suppose we go to a local factory where they are having an after-hours conference on national, regional and community projects. About 20 couples are present and one item is population. Writing in *Challange,* Lester Brown and Bruce Stokes explain that marriage at 18 is legal in China but that social pressure encourages later marriages; combined age of 50 for bride and groom is considered appropriate and presumably romantic.

Everything else is planned in China. Why not childbearing, too? The authors declare that "Once the number of births for a factory or neighborhood group has been set, the members allocate the births among themselves." Chinese family officials in countless interviews with westerners over the last five years insist that they don't use coercion, that they use persuasion by peers. If true it must be an extraordinary scene as couples decide who gets the next baby. The authors leave it at that, merely noting that there has been remarkable improvement in the Chinese standard of living over the last generation.

The yellow digits of the Population Clock aren't conspicuous from the street but they're there, just the same, moving around. They have significance above all for the superpowers whose population and problems increase. The US could cut its unemployment if it could export tools, factories, know-how to Russia; Russia could raise its living standard if it had credits and aid from the US. The world waits breathless, the digits circle, and the newborn enter a chancey existence.

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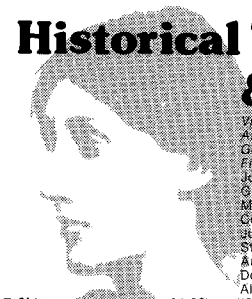

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The best news out of the judiciary recently is the holding last month by a very courageous judge of the New York State Supreme Court that it is not illegal to discriminate against lawyers. The case involved a landlord who refused to rent an apartment to a lawyer, on the sensible ground that lawyers are notoriously litigious and more likely than other people to make his life miserable asserting their so-called rights. As if to prove him correct, the lawyer—general counsel of the New York City Commission on Human Rights—immediately sued the landlord for discrimination, and also filed a complaint against him with the *State* Commission on Human Rights. This particular lawyer also happened to be a black woman but, because the building had plenty of other blacks and women, the only ground she had for claiming discrimination was a professional one. The landlord freely admitted in court that he had misread a request for "new appliances" in her handwritten rental application as a reference to "new rulings," and had turned her down out of fear that "she would be a source of trouble to me as a tenant." Unfortunately, he was cowed into settling the Human Rights Commission complaint for $1600 before winning the court case outright. Before you get up in arms at the thought that someone should be punished for asserting her rights, or even for appearing likely to assert her rights, consider that in this case she was asserting a right she didn't have, and that it cost the landlord $1600 plus lawyers' fees to find this out. Three cheers for this landlord, and for this judge. I urge readers in New York to take advantage of the new atmosphere of freedom in their state, and to discriminate against lawyers in all possible circumstances. There are so few people against whom we can discriminate these days, and even fewer so worthy of discrimination. We have reached the point where an illegible scrawl in the hand of a lawyer is enough to strike terror and fear of "new rulings" in a person who sees it. Surely this landmark decision is a signal for those few among us who aren't yet lawyers to rise up in revenge before it is too late.

Senate minority leader Howard Baker of Tennessee apparently has decided to run for President in 1980. To this end, he is trying to get people to pay more attention to what he has to say. Judging from a couple recent remarks, this is a mistake. Senator Baker's media advisers no doubt are worried enough already about how short he is. He shouldn't burden them any further by flaunting his lack of intellectual stature as well. Concerning the Panama Canal, for example, Baker has announced that he is keeping his position a secret. Why? "My job in the Senate is leadership. I'm going to let my fellow Republicans decide the issue on the merits and not simply stake out a position for myself that is politically popular." From this we deduce that (a) a leader's duty is to follow; and (b) other Republicans are capable of deciding issues on the merits, but Senator Baker is not. On the other hand Baker is willing to reveal his plan for peace in the Middle East: "I think President Carter ought to think of selecting a recognized, established Republican leader to participate actively in those negotiations" in order to "completely eliminate any concern that foreign policy was being formulated in secret or that it was being done on other than a full bipartisan exchange." Modesty limits his list of nominees to Henry Kissinger, William Rogers and Nelson Rockefeller. This is a wonderful idea, and one that I'm sure President Baker would be as eager to implement as past Presidents from his party have been. The principle that foreign policy should not be formulated in secret is one that Henry Kissinger himself holds in especially great esteem.

I am not widely travelled, but the editor of this journal is, and he assures me that in the Soviet Union there is no toilet paper in the public conveniences except in the major hotels. I take this (as it apparently was intended) as proof that the great experiment is a failure.

Perhaps it isn't too early in the holiday season for a little scroogery. Am I the only person a bit put-off by the United Way? Private charity is supposed to provide an alternative to the dead hand of the government as a method of financing worthy endeavors. But at least in Washington, the United Way itself takes on an eery Big Brother quality. There are United Way posters everywhere; for the past month every bus in the city has flown a United Way flag; and—eeriest of all—even the recorded weather announcement instructs you to "remember: it's always good weather to give the United Way." I doubt that the process of distributing largesse at the United Way is any less cautious, bureaucratic and unimaginative than it is at various government grant-dispensing centers such as HEW, the Endowments and the National Science Foundation. Certainly the decision is just as distant from the people whose money is being spent. And apparently the method of raising money can be just as coercive. The general organization of the United Way resembles that of the American Communist Party in the good old days; it is set up as a hierarchy of cells based on the workplace. Unlike the CP, however, the Way operates with the full cooperation of the employer. Last month a clerk at the Kansas City YWCA was fired on the grounds that her $10 United Way contribution was not considered sufficient. That YWCA branch requires that each employee contribute 12 hours' pay, or else. The government avoids embarrassments like this through a clever technique called withholding. I suppose that will be the United Way's next step.

I hope it is not any vestigial antifeminist impulse that is giving me so much pleasure at the way the women's conference in Houston was blown off the front pages by the Sadat extravaganza. It certainly is a strange idea that the government ought to be paying five million dollars for this sort of thing. Will it be a triumph for the movement when there are just as many women hustlers and self-promoters wasting as much of their time and other people's money at conventions, conferences and seminars as men? If so, I think we are almost there. Obviously the real purpose of the conference was to generate publicity and momentum for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment—a worthy enough end, however dubious the means. It was a classic example of Daniel Boorstin's "non-event"—something that happens only because there are reporters and TV cameras there to record and proclaim it. But those who live by the press shall perish by the press. Bella Abzug is a formidable showperson, but she clearly is no match for Anwar el-Sadat.

M.E.K

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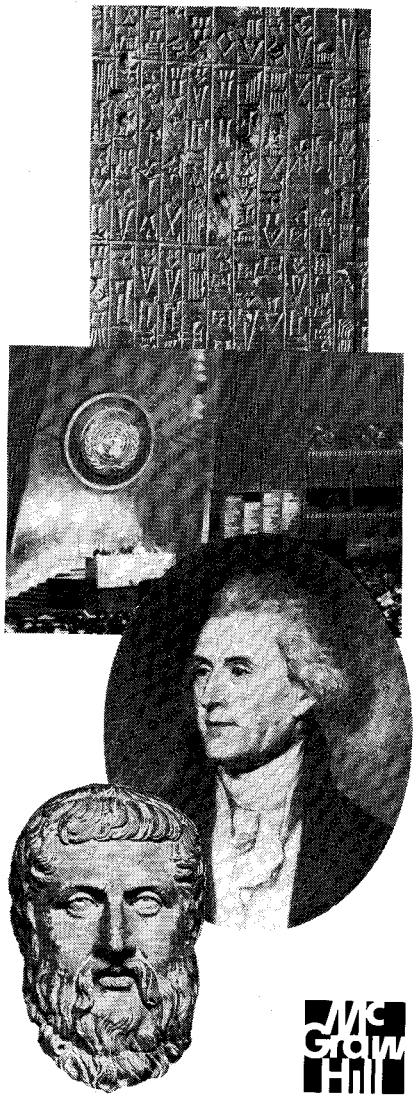

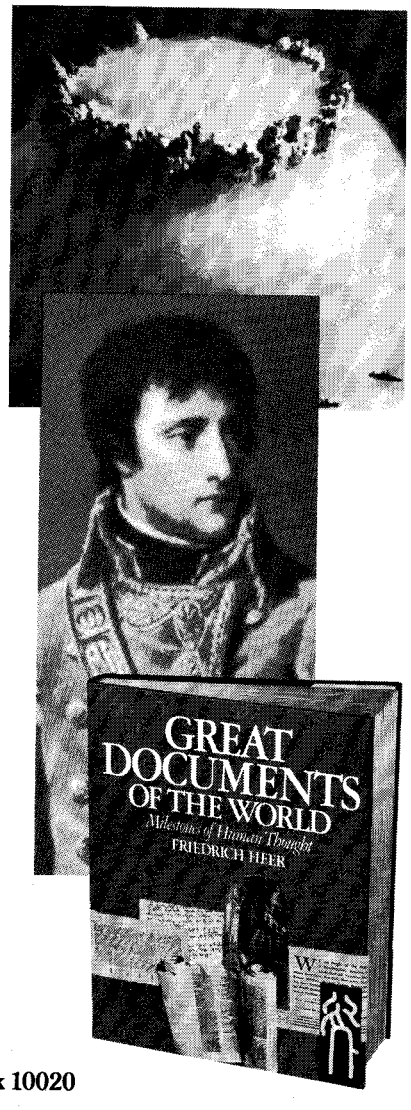

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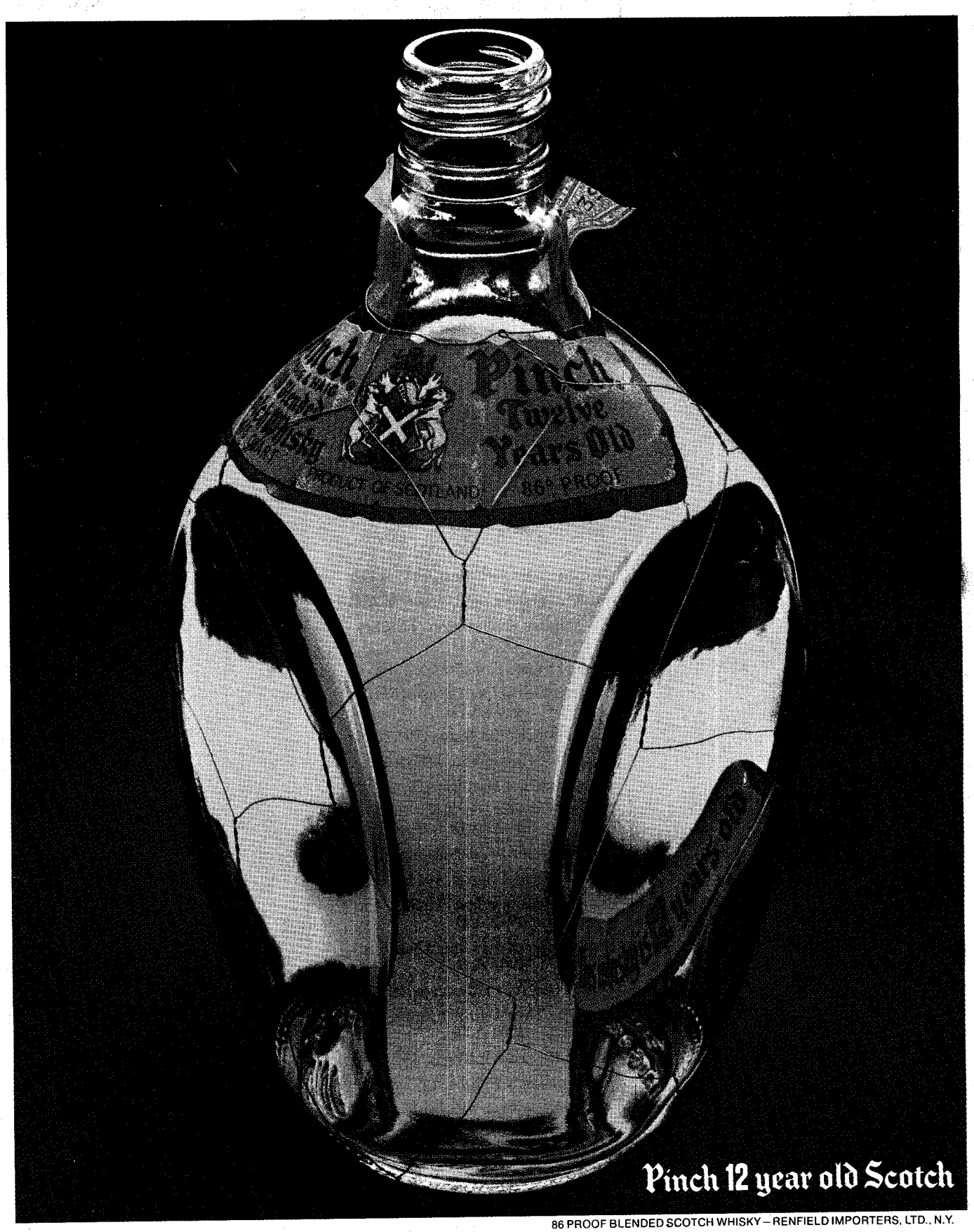

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